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COMING HOME.

By M. M. D.

(See Frontispiece.)

"COME, Kitty, come!" I said;
But still she waited—waited,
Nodding oft her pretty head
With, "I'm coming soon.
Father's rowing home, I know,
I cannot think what keeps him so,
Unless he's just belated.—
I'm coming soon."

"Come, Kate!" her mother called,
"The supper's almost ready."
But Kitty in her place installed,
Coaxed, "I'm coming soon.
Do let me wait. He's sure to come;
By this time father's always home—
He rows so fast and steady;
I'm coming soon."

"Come, Kit!" her brothers cried;
But Kitty by the water
Still eagerly the distance eyed,
With "I'm coming soon.
Why, what would evening be," said she,
"Without dear father home to tea?
Without his 'Ho, my daughter'—?
I'm coming soon."

"Come, Kit!" they half implore.
The child is softly humming,
She hardly hears them any more;
But "I'm coming soon"
Is in her heart; for far from shore—
Gliding the happy waters o'er—
She sees the boat, and cries, "He's coming!
We're coming soon!"

WILD BECKY.

BY EMMA PLIMPTON.



IF there was one thing that the country folks of Millville were proud of, over and above the new organ in their "meetin'-house," it was the Millville boarding-school, which capped the very topmost pinnacle of their village. A light set upon a hill, which shed its literary radiance over the whole place. Not that

the villagers received much benefit from the institution beyond the glory of its existence in their midst, for the cost of tuition was far beyond the means of the honest farmers, whose daughters were fain to be content with the learning obtained in the humble district school.

Cynthia Adams was the only day scholar; but she was the Squire's daughter, and it was a matter of course that her schooling should be something beyond that of the rest of the village girls.

One day, as the scholars were hanging over the school-yard fence, or sitting in groups on the steps waiting for the school-bell to ring, they heard a man with a lusty pair of lungs shouting, "Gee, haw, git up thar!" in a voice so loud that it threatened to shake the hills.

"That is one of old Miller's whispers, I do believe," laughed Cynthia. "He 's a farmer about here, with a roaring voice. Such a queer old fellow as he is, to be sure. I wish you girls could see him."

"I wish I might," answered fun-loving Millie King. "Does he live far from here?"

"His house is 'way down by the edge of the town, beyond the pine woods; they call the place Biscuit City."

"Why? Because they have so many biscuits there?" asked a dozen voices at once.

Cynthia shook her head.

"I guess it is because they don't have them," she said; "perhaps they wished they did, and so called it that. All I really know about it is, that there does not seem to be any one there to cook much, any way; for Farmer Miller lives alone with his granddaughter, a girl about our age."

"Could n't she make biscuits?" persisted Millie, unwilling to give up the idea that they abounded in Biscuit City.

"Becky! I'd like to see anything decent that Wild Becky could make. No one in the village will have anything to do with her, for she's such a wild, harum-scarum thing, and so green too, that you'd mistake her for grass, just as likely as not."

Cynthia stopped abruptly, for the "Gee-haws" sounded nearer every moment, and now a pair of oxen came lumbering over the brow of the hill, followed by a rickety hay-cart, at the end of which was poised a bare-headed young person in a cloud of dust. Her ample bonnet swung from the top of one of the poles which formed the sides of the cart, evidently for the purpose of proving to the passers-by that the occupant possessed the article, though she did not choose to wear it. She looked up at it rather wistfully, however, as her companion, Farmer Miller, with thundering exclamations, drove the cart up to the school-house gate.

"Pile out, Becky!" he roared, "and we 'll soon fix it up with 'em here. Don't be skeered, gal. Be you the school-marm?"

The question was addressed to Miss Peters, the principal, who at this juncture came politely forward.

"I have 'nt much larnin' myself, ma'am," he continued, "but I'm bound that my gal here shall have as good a chance as the rest of 'em. She 's a good gal, Becky is, only a trifle wild-like, and needs settling a bit. I'm a better hand at settling bills than lively young creaturs like this one, so if you 'll tend to one, I 'll tend to t' other;" and handing the poor girl over, tumbling her bonnet after her, he was half-way down the hill before Wild Becky had made up her mind whether she would be settled or not.

It was very disagreeable standing there with all the girls staring at her, she thought; and glancing shyly out from under her long lashes, her eyes

rested gladly on the familiar features of the Squire's daughter.

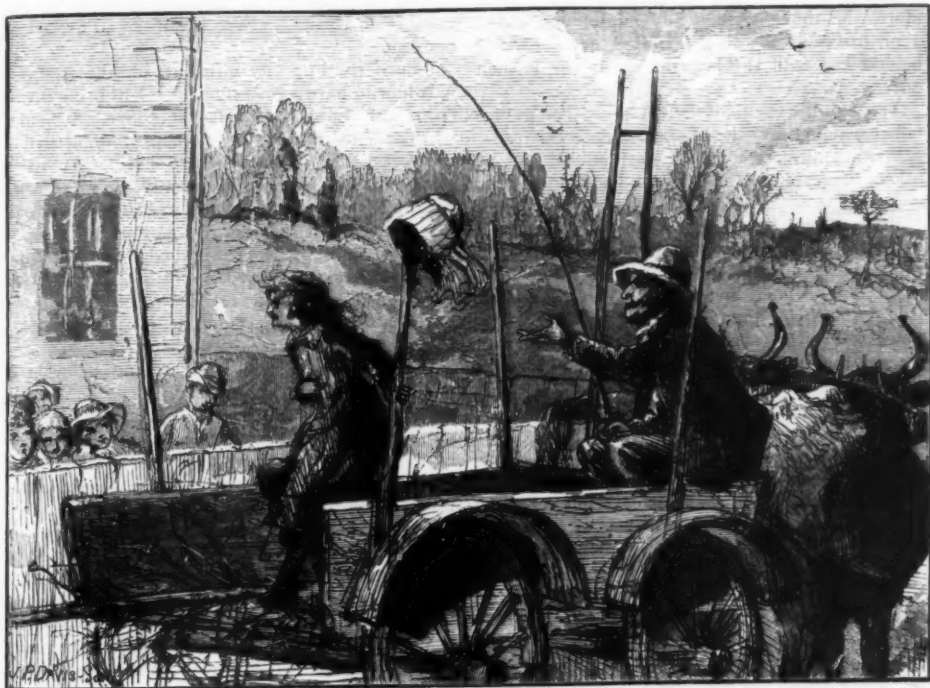
"How do, Cynthia?" she said, nodding in such a civil way that it surprised herself.

Cynthia looked blankly into her face a moment without making the slightest sign of recognition, then wheeling round on her heels, she turned her back squarely upon her.

A titter went round the yard; every one seemed amused but poor Becky, who shut her mouth tightly, and her heart too, for that matter, and

effort to plume herself down that morning into a civilized girl, and mingle with her fellow-beings.

It was harder even than she had imagined: the close school-room almost stifled her, while the dull, monotonous hum of voices had such a stupefying effect that, before she had been seated long, her head dropped on her desk and she fell fast asleep. She was awakened by something tickling her nose; putting her hand up quickly, a great bouncing butterfly fluttered through her fingers and shot up into the air. Now this was a playmate Wild



FARMER MILLER BRINGS WILD BECKY TO SCHOOL.

fairly hated her kind. As she joined the crowd squeezing into the school-house, she wondered why she had ever consented to be brought to school. The old wild life perfectly contented her. To roll about for hours under the wide-spreading oaks with the friendly squirrels, or to chase the brook as it dashed gayly down the hills, was much pleasanter than the society of other girls, she had always thought.

But the fact was, her grandfather had taken it into his dear old head to make a lady of her, and rather than disappoint the kind soul who did so much for her, Wild Becky had made a desperate

Becky never could resist: without half realizing where she was, she burst into a loud laugh, and was making a dive for it when, recollecting herself, she slid down again into her seat, with the painful consciousness that all eyes were upon her. The pair that terrified her most were those upon the platform,—not Miss Peters's eyes, but those of another teacher who had come into the room during Becky's nap.

"Where did *you* come from?" asked the woman, sharply, for she was indignant at the interruption of her class.

"Biscuit City, ma'am," was the prompt reply.

"A land productive of biscuits and rude girls," returned the teacher, facetiously, at which the scholars, particularly the older ones, laughed most obligingly.

"Unless you can command yourself, you had best return there at once," she continued.

Wild Becky did not need much urging on that score. As quickly as possible she sprang from her seat, and vaulting through the open window, swung herself down to the ground as neatly as a boy would have done it, for she was in great wrath. To be snubbed herself was bad enough, but to hear one speaking disrespectfully of her home was a little more, she thought, than any mortal was called upon to bear. So, off she trotted, never looking behind her until she brought up at her kitchen door.

Through the opening she could see her grandfather bending over the big brick oven.

"Sakes alive, school aint out yet, be it?" he asked, lifting himself up to get a good view of the clock.

Becky flung herself down on the steps and poured forth her injuries, winding up with a declaration of independence.

"I'll never go again; never. You will not ask it of me, will you, grandfather?"

"Not if you're set ag'in it," said the old man with a sigh; and he passed into the buttery and brought out a heaping dish of pancakes.

"I thought as how you'd come home hungry, and so I made a lot of 'em."

Becky had a weakness for pancakes, and was quite touched with the attention. She moved a chair near them and tried to eat; but somehow they seemed to stick in her throat. The idea that her grandfather was sorely disappointed made them very hard to swallow.

"What makes you care so much about my being a lady?" she said at length, laying down her knife and fork and looking fixedly at him.

The old farmer wiped his glasses carefully.

"I dun know," he answered; "p'raps its 'cause your mother would have liked it; she used to take to 'arnin', and to gentle ways, and grand folks, as nat'rally as horses take to hay. I wanted you to be like her; but laws me! 'tain't in natur' 's you could be that kind any more than a hen could be a gosling. It don't matter."

"Yes it does, grandfather;" and Becky, jumping up, wound her arms around his neck, and shed a tear or two on the back of his old waistcoat.

"It is n't that I'm so against the learning," she continued; "it's the folks I can't stand."

"Well, some of 'em is rather tryin'," answered the farmer; "but there is one powerful queer thing in human natur'. If you feel ag'in a man, do

a favor for him, an' you're sure to like him better. There's Squire Adams, I used to hate him like pisen; but since I've been in the habit of lending on him my yoke of oxen, I've got the better on it."

"Well, grandpa, I'll go to school just one day longer to lend 'em to his daughter."

Becky spoke jestingly at the time, but as the patient expression settled again on the face she loved, all the better part of her wild nature was stirred.

"That's a queer idea of yours," she cried, "and I've a mind to see if it will work in my case."

And then she fell to thinking what she could possibly do for those whose wealth so far exceeded her own.

"Such fixed-up city girls have n't the slightest idea how to have a good time. I might bring them down here and show them how it is done. It would be a deal of trouble; but perhaps it might make me feel better toward them. I'd rather have snakes 'round, by half; those stuck-up things will make all manner of fun of me, and of the dear old place; but s'pose they do, it wont hurt."

So, to the surprise of everybody, the following day Wild Becky appeared at school. The scholars all laughed as she came tearing in, and, making a queer little bob which did duty for a courtesy, begged to be forgiven yesterday's misdoings.

Perhaps Miss Peters knew by instinct what a penance this was to the child, or it may be that, in spite of her prim little way, she had a real sympathy for Becky, and disapproved of the offensive manner of her assistant. At all events, the matter was lightly treated, and the "wild girl" was soon established in her own seat.

At recess, the girls paired off two by two, but no one spoke to her.

"Dear, dear," thought the child; "nobody is n't anybody here unless they are a couple, and I aint!"

When the afternoon session broke up that day, a hay-cart with two big work-horses stood drawn up before the fashionable establishment. The floor of the cart was strewn thickly with fragrant hay, while old Farmer Miller, in his shirt-sleeves, held the reins. Cynthia Adams was one of the last to leave the school-room. Who can describe her astonishment when, upon gaining the yard, she beheld Wild Becky standing on a horse-block, and actually inviting these city girls to "hitch on?" Most of the scholars looked as horrified as Cynthia had expected; but Millie King and four or five other jolly souls tumbled in just for the fun of it.

Farmer Miller shouted to Miss Peters that he'd bring 'em home safe and sound afore bed-time, and, cracking his whip, they were soon rattling down the hill, the girls getting such a shake-up as

they had never had before; but they held on to the poles like monkeys, filling the way with their merry shouts and laughter, and by the time they reached the long winding road through the pine-woods, they were thoroughly enchanted with their novel mode of riding.

Such a queer, homely house as it was before which they stopped! Becky did n't try to hide any part of it, but made them welcome to the whole, and to the great barn, too, with its numberless hiding-places, initiating them at once into the most approved way of sliding down the hay-mows, and riding on the great swinging doors. She took them also across the meadows to the stream, with

And, surely enough, the girls did laugh. To see such great platters of smoking-hot sweet corn, such huge pitchers of creamy milk, such stacks of freshly picked berries, was enough to make any hungry school-girl laugh, and in a way very pleasant to hear.

"Why, Becky, you have enough here to be dealt out for a whole term up to the boarding-school!" said Millie; and she gave thanks that Miss Peters was n't there to see them eat; and well she might, for that prudent lady would have been shocked, indeed, at the sight.

Then followed a shake-down on the smooth floor of the barn, accomplished by the aid of Farmer



"THE STREAM WITH THE LITTLE GROVE BESIDE IT."

the little grove beside it, and there they fished for trout; not that they caught enough to boast

of, for only the most venturesome of fishes would bite in that uproar of voices. When they tired of that sport, they chased the colts in the orchard, and hunted out the squirrels, with whom Becky carried on such a droll make-believe conversation, that the girls, as they said, "almost died of laughing."

The sun was getting low, and the grass was all purple with shadows, when she brought out a table and said that they would have their supper under the shade of a great butternut-tree.

"This is the time they'll laugh," thought Becky; "but let 'em; I could n't get up a genteel tea, to save my life, and I sha' n't try."

Miller, who whistled the tune of "Over the hills and far away," from the corn-bin.

It was n't until the young moon shone out clear and silvery that the girls found themselves in the hay-cart riding briskly toward the school.

"I believe I never had such a good time in all my life before," cried Millie, as she saw, with regret, the outline of the building through the trees.

"Nor I, nor I, nor I," was heard in answer.

Farmer Miller recognized one of the voices, and blessed it in his heart. It was Wild Becky's. As the others left them, she crawled over to her grandfather's side, and laid her hand, warm from the grateful grasp of the school-girls, on his arm. She cried:

"You are right, grandpa, after all; girls are better playmates than squirrels, and there is nothing

like doing favors for folks to make one feel good-natured toward them."

After this, Becky never had any more trouble about "being a couple," nor was she disturbed again by disrespectful references to her home and its productions.

In fact, before many days had passed, to get an invitation to Biscuit City was considered by her schoolmates as the acme of bliss; but the girls noticed that it was the home-sick or the neglected that were invited oftenest.

This started a better state of things with Becky. She began to truly like the girls; then she loved

one or two dearly in true school-girl fashion, and, to be worthy of their love, she tried to improve her manners. Next came ambition in her studies, and as under it all lay a deep affection for the good grandfather, she came out at the end of the year one of the brightest, happiest girls in the school.

There were outbreaks of mischief now and then. As the old man roared to the teacher one day, "She could n't be tamed all to once;" but his little girl had at last found the golden key. And so, in brightening the lives of the unhappy, and in making sunshine for all, Becky became in time a lady in every sense of that much misused term.



"I WISH I WAS A MAN!"



"I WISH I WAS A WOMAN!"

A "MUCHACHO" OF THE MEXICAN CAMP.

BY MARY HALLOCK FOOTE.

HIS name was Estaban Avilla, and he was called "for short" "Banito."

We became acquainted one afternoon on the road to the Mexican camp. I had just met Tommy Job (a Cornish lad who brought our milk in the morning and our mail in the afternoon) and taken from him two or three letters, and was sitting on a dusty rock by the roadside reading them. A step pausing beside me, and a shadow falling across my page, I looked up and saw a pair of black eyes looking down. Banito did not want to read my letters,—he thought I was drawing; and all the miners' children in both the Cornish and Mexican camps felt at liberty to look over my shoulder when

I was sketching. I don't think I ever invited them to do so. They did it quite naturally, regarding it, perhaps, as part of that right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness to which most of them were born. I folded my letter up and looked at Banito, whereupon he gave a short laugh and darted off up the hill. Just at the top, where the road winds out of sight round a shoulder of the hill, with the shadow of a live-oak tree lying black across it, he stopped and looked back, his little, dark figure between the blue sky and the reddish-yellow road. Nothing else to be seen except the live-oak tree with its spot of black shade.

It took me some time to climb the hill up which

Banito had fled so quickly, then I saw him curled up in the limbs of the live-oak peering down at me with a half-shy, half-saucy smile.

"Come down and let me draw a picture of you," I said. (The Mexican children play with those of the Cornish camp, and understand English quite well.) He laughed and turned his head away sharply, but I knew he would come down.

"Come where I can sit in the shade," I said, "and bring my stool."

in the sun, pulling at the dry bunches of sage-grass, and looking at me from the shadow of his hat-brim with those queer, dubious glances.

If the camp-children had been robins in spring, and we the first ripe cherries, they could not have found us more quickly, or flocked more gayly and noisily about us. There were muchachos from the Mexican camp,—every shade of brown and yellow,—there were rosy, saucy, irrepressible Cornish youngsters. I tried to keep them near me, so my



BANITO AND HIS PET.

I left the little camp-stool in the middle of the road and walked on slowly, as if waiting for him.

"There is a big shade down there."

He pointed to the slope of the hill where another live-oak leaned his dark, twisted trunk away from the wind. All the trees lean the same way, for the same untiring steady wind blows for months and months over these hills. Their boughs are trimmed, on the under side, as smoothly as the top of a hedge, as far as the hungry cattle can reach. I made myself comfortable in the "big shade," and began sharpening a pencil. Banito made himself comfortable

shy little model might be undisturbed; but one ruddy-brown Mexican boy—cheeks the color of a russet apple in October—stole behind him and pricked him in the neck with a sheep-burr.

Catching my eye, he plunged back into the midst of the group under the tree.

I asked his name, and Banito said it was his brother, Francisco, and that he was "very bad"; but he laughed as he said it. Then I remembered his face as one of a flock of six that crowded round me one day when I sat making a sketch under the shadow of the high, bare porch of their "casa."

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The mother, leaning over the railing, had told me all their names. She, too, had said Francisco was very bad ("muey malo," she called it), and she, too, had laughed. I asked Francisco where he kept all his badness, for I could not see any of it in his face. Bad boys do not look as happy as Francisco did, and he snuggled in among his comrades as if he were sure of a welcome. He looked merry, wild and dirty. I dare say he tore his clothes, and was a sad trouble to his mother. A little girl who jogged my elbow and was invited to move further off (and cordially assisted to do so by all her neighbors) had the bluest eyes that ever shone under a torn hat-brim.

"Was she not a Cornish girl?" I asked.

"No," she said; "I'm English."

"Were you not born at the mine? Perhaps you are an American."

"No, ma'am. I aint a 'Merican. I was born down to San José."

Another little girl coughed and looked as if she had been ill. She told me they "was allays sick back there," and when I tried to find out where "back there" was,—where she had lived before coming to the mine,—she only answered my repeated questions with: "Oh, in a kind o' brown house back there."

Banito had been very still for some time, and his face began to droop as if he were tired; so I hurried with the sketch. The children hearing the heavy wheels of the stage rattling up the last hill, scampered off to welcome it on its arrival, in company with all the dogs and other loose and noisy live-stock of the camp.

Banito looked wistfully after them, but with the prospect of "two bits" resigned himself to five minutes longer.

"Two bits" represents a large share of the joys

of this world to an Almaden boy. For two bits you can get of Costa—the vegetable man—a ripe, spicy musk-melon as big as your head, or a water-melon twice as big, or a hatful of peaches, or a double handful of fresh figs, or two paper bags of stale candy at the store. A Cornish lad might put it in a tin bank until Christmas and the new stock of toys arrived, but a Mexican never!

I am quite sure Banito's silver quarter was spent before he slept that night, and as the Mexicans are very generous, no doubt the five brothers and sisters in the bare, high-stooped house on the hill, each had a share in Banito's purchase, including Francisco, who was "muey malo."

The little dark object which Banito holds by a string is meant to look like a "horned toad." They are strange little creatures,—so delicately made, yet so roughly carved and fretted; so still, sometimes for long minutes, that they might indeed be carved stone or fretted bronze; then, at a sudden movement, they will slide off as swift and silent as a shadow. They are utterly deaf,—even a pistol-shot fired close to one's head would not disturb his immovable stillness if he saw nothing to alarm. They seem to have a kind of sensitiveness under the rough, dark skin; light finger-touches on the head will soothe them to sleep, and they are easily tamed into a dull, passive companionship.

A friend of mine had one named "Mr. Hopper," which she kept in various dim corners of the house and garden. He came to a tragic end at last by winding the string that held him round and round a stubby bunch of grass, in his efforts to escape some object which had frightened him, and so hung himself. We thought, perhaps, it was deliberate suicide on Mr. Hopper's part, as he seemed of a melancholy and listless disposition, and took but little interest in life.

THE PETERKINS DECIDE TO STUDY THE LANGUAGES.

BY LUCRETIA P. HALE.

CERTAINLY now was the time to study the languages. The Peterkins had moved into a new house, far more convenient than their old one, where they would have a place for everything and everything in its place. Of course they would then have more time.

Elizabeth Eliza recalled the troubles of the old house, how for a long time she was obliged to sit

outside of the window upon the piazza, when she wanted to play on her piano.

Mrs. Peterkin reminded them of the difficulty about the table-cloths. The upper table-cloth was kept in a trunk that had to stand in front of the door to the closet under the stairs. But the under table-cloth was kept in a drawer in the closet. So, whenever the cloths were changed, the trunk

had to be pushed away under some projecting shelves to make room for opening the closet door (as the under table-cloth must be taken out first), then the trunk was pushed back, to make room for it to be opened for the upper table-cloth, and, after all, it was necessary to push the trunk away again to open the closet-door for the knife-tray. This always consumed a great deal of time.

Now that the china-closet was large enough, everything could find a place in it.

Agamemnon especially enjoyed the new library. In the old house there was no separate room for books. The dictionaries were kept upstairs, which was very inconvenient, and the volumes of the encyclopædia could not be together. There was not room for all in one place. So from A to P were to be found down-stairs, and from Q to Z were scattered in different rooms upstairs. And the worst of it was, you could never remember whether from A to P included P. "I always went upstairs after P," said Agamemnon, "and then always found it down-stairs, or else it was the other way."

Of course now there were more conveniences for study. With the books all in one room, there would be no time wasted in looking for them.

Mr. Peterkin suggested they should each take a separate language. If they went abroad, this would prove a great convenience. Elizabeth Eliza could talk French with the Parisians; Agamemnon, German with the Germans; Solomon John, Italian with the Italians; Mrs. Peterkin, Spanish in Spain; and, perhaps he could himself master all the Eastern languages and Russian.

Mrs. Peterkin was uncertain about undertaking the Spanish, but all the family felt very sure they should not go to Spain (as Elizabeth Eliza dreaded the Inquisition), and Mrs. Peterkin felt more willing.

Still she had quite an objection to going abroad. She had always said she would not go till a bridge was made across the Atlantic, and she was sure it did not look like it now.

Agamemnon said there was no knowing. There was something new every day, and a bridge was surely not harder to invent than a telephone, for they had bridges in the very earliest days.

Then came up the question of the teachers. Probably these could be found in Boston. If they could all come the same day, three could be brought put in the carry-all. Agamemnon could go in for them, and could learn a little on the way out and in.

Mr. Peterkin made some inquiries about the Oriental languages. He was told that Sanscrit was at the root of all. So he proposed they should all begin with Sanscrit. They would thus require but one teacher, and could branch out into the other languages afterward.

But the family preferred learning the separate languages. Elizabeth Eliza already knew something of the French. She had tried to talk it, without much success, at the Centennial Exhibition, at one of the side-stands. But she found she had been talking with a Moorish gentleman who did not understand French. Mr. Peterkin feared they might need more libraries, if all the teachers came at the same hour; but Agamemnon reminded him that they would be using different dictionaries. And Mr. Peterkin thought something might be learned by having them all at once. Each one might pick up something beside the language he was studying, and it was a great thing to learn to talk a foreign language while others were talking about you. Mrs. Peterkin was afraid it would be like the Tower of Babel, and hoped it was all right.

Agamemnon brought forward another difficulty. Of course they ought to have foreign teachers, who spoke only their native languages. But, in this case, how could they engage them to come, or explain to them about the carry-all, or arrange the proposed hours? He did not understand how anybody ever began with a foreigner, because he could not even tell him what he wanted.

Elizabeth Eliza thought a great deal might be done by signs and pantomime. Solomon John and the little boys began to show how it might be done. Elizabeth Eliza explained how "*langues*" meant both "*languages*" and "*tongues*," and they could point to their tongues. For practice, the little boys represented the foreign teachers talking in their different languages, and Agamemnon and Solomon John went to invite them to come out, and teach the family, by a series of signs.

Mr. Peterkin thought their success was admirable, and that they might almost go abroad without any study of the languages, and trust to explaining themselves by signs. Still, as the bridge was not yet made, it might be as well to wait and cultivate the languages.

Mrs. Peterkin was afraid the foreign teachers might imagine they were invited out to lunch. Solomon John had constantly pointed to his mouth as he opened it and shut it, putting out his tongue; and it looked a great deal more as if he were inviting them to eat, than asking them to teach. Agamemnon suggested they might carry the separate dictionaries when they went to see the teachers, and that would show they meant lessons and not lunch.

Mrs. Peterkin was not sure but she ought to prepare a lunch for them, if they had come all that way; but she certainly did not know what they were accustomed to eat.

Mr. Peterkin thought this would be a good thing to learn of the foreigners. It would be a good

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preparation for going abroad, and they might get used to the dishes before starting. The little boys were delighted at the idea of having new things cooked. Agamemnon had heard that beer-soup was a favorite dish with the Germans, and he would inquire how it was made in the first lesson. Solomon John had heard they were all very fond of garlic, and thought it would be a pretty attention to have some in the house the first day, that they might be cheered by the odor.

Elizabeth Eliza wanted to surprise the lady from Philadelphia by her knowledge of French, and hoped to begin on the lessons before the Philadelphia family arrived for their annual visit.

There were still some delays. Mr. Peterkin was very anxious to obtain teachers who had been but a short time in this country. He did not want to be tempted to talk any English with them. He wanted the latest and freshest languages, and at last came home one day with a list of "brand new foreigners."

They decided to borrow the Bromwich's carry-all, to use besides their own for the first day, and Mr. Peterkin and Agamemnon drove into town to bring all the teachers out. One was a Russian gentleman traveling, who came with no idea of giving lessons, and perhaps he would consent to do so. He could not yet speak English.

Mr. Peterkin had his card-case, and the cards of the several gentlemen who had recommended the different teachers, and he went with Agamemnon from hotel to hotel collecting them. He found them all very polite, and ready to come, after the explanation by signs agreed upon. The dictionaries had been forgotten, but Agamemnon had a directory which looked the same, and seemed to satisfy the foreigners.

Mr. Peterkin was obliged to content himself with the Russian instead of one who could teach Sanscrit, as there was no new teacher of that language lately arrived.

But there was an unexpected difficulty in getting the Russian gentleman into the same carriage with the teacher of Arabic, for he was a Turk, sitting with a fez on his head, on the back seat! They glared at each other, and began to assail each other in every language they knew, none of which Mr. Peterkin could understand. It might be Russian, it might be Arabic. It was easy to understand that they would never consent to sit in the same carriage. Mr. Peterkin was in despair; he had forgotten about the Russian war! What a mistake to have invited the Turk!

Quite a crowd collected on the sidewalk in front of the hotel. But the French gentleman politely, but stiffly, invited the Russian to go with him in the first carry-all. Here was another difficulty. For the German professor was quietly ensconced

on the back seat! As soon as the French gentleman put his foot on the step and saw him, he addressed him in such forcible language that the German professor got out of the door the other side, and came round on the sidewalk, and took him by the collar. Certainly the German and French gentlemen could not be put together, and more crowd collected!

Agamemnon, however, had happily studied up the German word "Herr," and he applied it to the German, inviting him by signs to take a seat in the other carry-all. The German consented to sit by the Turk, as they neither of them could understand the other; and at last they started, Mr. Peterkin with the Italian by his side, and the French and Russian teachers behind, vociferating to each other in languages unknown to Mr. Peterkin, while he feared they were not perfectly in harmony, so he drove home as fast as possible. Agamemnon had a silent party. The Spaniard by his side was a little moody, while the Turk and the German behind did not utter a word.

At last they reached the house, and were greeted by Mrs. Peterkin and Elizabeth Eliza, Mrs. Peterkin with her llama lace shawl over her shoulders, as a tribute to the Spanish teacher. Mr. Peterkin was careful to take his party in first, and deposit them in a distant part of the library, far from the Turk or the German, even putting the Frenchman and Russian apart.

Solomon John found the Italian dictionary, and seated himself by his Italian; Agamemnon, with the German dictionary, by the German. The little boys took their copy of the "Arabian Nights" to the Turk. Mr. Peterkin attempted to explain to the Russian that he had no Russian dictionary, as he had hoped to learn Sanscrit of him, while Mrs. Peterkin was trying to inform her teacher that she had no book in Spanish. She got over all fears of the Inquisition, he looked so sad, and she tried to talk a little, using English words, but very slowly, and altering the accent as far as she knew how. The Spaniard bowed, looked gravely interested, and was very polite.

Elizabeth Eliza, meanwhile, was trying her grammar phrases with the Parisian. She found it easier to talk French than to understand him. But he understood perfectly her sentences. She repeated one of her vocabularies, and went on with—"J'ai le livre." "As-tu le pain?" "L'enfant a une poire." He listened with great attention, and replied slowly. Suddenly she started after making out one of his sentences, and went to her mother to whisper, "They have made the mistake you feared. They think they are invited to lunch! He has just been thanking me for our politeness in inviting them to *déjeuner*,—that means breakfast!"

"They have not had their breakfast!" exclaimed Mrs. Peterkin, looking at her Spaniard; "he does look hungry! What shall we do?"

Elizabeth Eliza was consulting her father. What should they do? How should they make them understand that they invited them to teach, not lunch. Elizabeth Eliza begged Agamemnon to look out "*apprendre*" in the dictionary. It must mean to teach. Alas, they found it means both to teach and to learn! What should they do? The foreigners were now sitting silent in their different corners. The Spaniard grew more and more sal-low. What if he should faint? The Frenchman was rolling up each of his mustaches to a point as he gazed at the German. What if the Russian should fight the Turk? What if the German should be exasperated by the airs of the Parisian?

"We must give them something to eat," said Mr. Peterkin in a low tone. "It would calm them."

"If I only knew what they were used to eating," said Mrs. Peterkin.

Solomon John suggested that none of them knew what the others were used to eating, and they might bring in anything.

Mrs. Peterkin hastened out with hospitable intents. Amanda could make good coffee. Mr. Peterkin had suggested some American dish. Solomon John sent a little boy for some olives.

It was not long before the coffee came in, and a dish of baked beans. Next, some olives and a loaf

of bread, and some boiled eggs, and some bottles of beer. The effect was astonishing. Every man spoke his own tongue and fluently. Mrs. Peterkin poured out coffee for the Spaniard, while he bowed to her. They all liked beer, they all liked olives. The Frenchman was fluent about "*les manières Américaines*." Elizabeth Eliza supposed he alluded to their not having set any table. The Turk smiled, the Russian was voluble. In the midst of the clang of the different languages, just as Mr. Peterkin was again repeating, under cover of the noise of many tongues, "How shall we make them understand that we want them to teach?"—at this very moment—the door was flung open, and there came in the lady from Philadelphia, that day arrived, her first call of the season!

She started back in terror at the tumult of so many different languages! The family, with joy, rushed to meet her. All together they called upon her to explain for them. Could she help them? Could she tell the foreigners they wanted to take lessons! Lessons? They had no sooner uttered the word than their guests all started up with faces beaming with joy. It was the one English word they all knew! They had come to Boston to give lessons! The Russian traveler had hoped to learn English in this way. The thought pleased them more than the *déjeuner*. Yes, gladly would they give lessons. The Turk smiled at the idea. The first step was taken. The teachers knew they were expected to teach.



"Will you walk into my frying-pan?"
Said the Nabob to the trout.

"No, thanks, my lord, 't is cooler here;
I don't think I'll come out."

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A JOLLY FELLOWSHIP.

BY FRANK R. STOCKTON.

CHAPTER III.

RECTUS OPENS HIS EYES.



WAS all right the next day, and we staid on deck most of the time, standing around the smoke-stack when our noses got a little blue with the cold. There were not many other people on deck. I was expecting young Rectus to have his turn at sea-sickness, but he disappointed me. He spent a good deal of his time calculating our position on a little

folding-map he had. He inquired how fast we were going, and then he worked the whole thing out, from Sandy Hook to Savannah, marking on the map the hours at which he ought to be at such and such a place. He tried his best to get his map of the course all right, and made a good many alterations, so that we were off Cape Charles several times in the course of the day. Rectus had never been very good at calculations, and I was glad to see that he was beginning to take an interest in such things.

The next morning, just after day-break, we were awakened by a good deal of trampling about on deck, over our heads, and we turned out, sharp, to see what the matter was. Rectus wanted me to wait, after we were dressed, until he could get out his map and calculate where we were, but I could n't stop for such nonsense, for I knew that his kind of navigation did n't amount to much, and so we scrambled up on deck. The ship was pitching and tossing worse than she had done yet. We had been practicing the "sea-leg" business the day before, and managed to walk along pretty well; but this morning our sea-legs did n't work at all, and we could n't take a step without hanging on to something. When we got on deck, we found that the first officer, or mate,—his name was Randall,—with three or four sailors, was throwing the lead to see how deep the water was. We hung on to a couple of stays and watched them. It was a rousing big lead, a foot long, and the line ran out over a pulley at the stern. A sailor took the lead a good way forward before he threw it, so as to give it a chance to get to the bottom before the steamer passed over it and began to tow it. When they

pulled it in, we were surprised to see that it took three men to do it. Then Mr. Randall scooped out a piece of tallow that was in a hollow in the bottom of the lead, and took it to show to the captain, whose room was on deck. I knew this was one way they had of finding out where they were, for they examined the sand or mud on the tallow, and so knew what sort of a bottom they were going over; and all the different kinds of bottom were marked out on their charts.

As Mr. Randall passed us, Rectus sung out to him, and asked him where we were now.

"Off Hatteras," said he, quite shortly.

I did n't think Rectus should have bothered Mr. Randall with questions when he was so busy; but after he went into the captain's room, the men did not seem to have much to do, and I asked one of them how deep it was.

"About seventeen fathom," said he.

"Can we see Cape Hatteras?" I said, trying to get a good look landward as the vessel rolled over that way.

"No," said the man. "We could see the light, just before day-break, but the weather's gettin' thick now, and we're keepin' out."

It was pretty thick to the west, that was true. All that I could see in the distance was a very mixed-up picture of wave-tops and mist. I knew that Cape Hatteras was one of the most dangerous points on the coast, and that sailors were always glad when they had safely rounded it, and so I began to take a good deal of interest in what was going on. There was a pretty strong wind from the south-east, and we had no sail set at all. Every now and then the steamer would get herself up on top of a big wave, and then drop down, sideways, as if she were sliding off the top of a house. The mate and the captain soon came out on deck together, and the captain went forward to the pilot-house, while Mr. Randall came over to his men, and they got ready to throw the lead again. It did n't seem to me that the line ran out as far as it did the last time, and I think I heard Mr. Randall say, "Fourteen." At any rate, a man was sent forward to the pilot-house, and directly we heard the rudder-chains creaking, and the big iron arms of the rudder, which were on deck, moved over toward the landward side of the vessel, and I knew by that that the captain was putting her head out to sea. Mr. Randall took out the tallow from the lead and laid it in an empty bucket that was lashed to the deck. He



"HOLD YOUR TONGUE!" ROARED MR. RANDALL.

seemed to be more anxious now about the depth of water than about the kind of bottom we were passing over. The lead was just about to be thrown again, when Rectus, who had taken the tallow out of the bucket, which stood near us, and had examined it pretty closely, started off to speak to Mr. Randall, with the tallow in his hand.

"Look here!" said Rectus, holding on to the railing, "I'll tell you what would be a sight better than tallow for your leads. Just you get some fine, white Castile-soap, and —"

"Confound you!" roared Mr. Randall, turning savagely on him. "Hold your tongue! For three cents I'd tie you to this line and drag the bottom with you!"

Rectus made no answer. He did n't offer him the three cents, but came away promptly, and put the piece of tallow back in the bucket. He did n't get any comfort from me.

"Have n't you got any better sense," I said to him, "than to go, with your nonsense, to the first officer at such a time as this? I never saw such a boy!"

"But the soap *is* better than the tallow," said Rectus. "It's finer and whiter, and would take up the sand better."

"No, it would n't," I growled at him; "the water would wash it out in half a minute. You need n't be trying to tell anybody on this ship what they ought to do."

"But supposing —" said he.

"No," I exclaimed, in a way that made him jump, "there's no supposing about it. If you know their business better than they do, why, just let it stand that way. It won't hurt you."

I was pretty mad, I must say, for I did n't want to see a fellow like Rectus trying to run the ship. But you could n't stay mad with Rectus long. He did n't mean any wrong, and he gave no words back, and so, as you might expect, we were all right again by breakfast-time.

The next morning we were surprised to feel how warm it was on deck. We did n't need our overcoats. The sea was ever so much smoother, too. There were two or three ladies on deck, who could walk pretty well.

About noon, I was standing on the upper deck, when I saw Rectus coming toward me, looking very pale. He was generally a dark sort of a boy, and it made a good deal of difference in him to look pale. I was sure he was going to be sick, at last, — although it was rather queer for him to knock under when the voyage was pretty nearly over, — and I began to laugh, when he said to me, in a nervous sort of way:

"I tell you what it is, I believe that we've gone past the mouth of the Savannah River. According to my calculations," said he, pointing to a spot



"RECTUS SHOWED ME THE MAP."

on his map which he held in his hand, "we must be down about here, off the Georgia coast."

I have said that I began to laugh, and now I kept

on. I just sat down and roared, so that the people looked at me.

"You need n't laugh," said Rectus. "I believe it's so."

"All right, my boy," said I; "but we won't tell the captain. Just let's wait and have the fun of seeing him turn 'round and go back."

Rectus did n't say anything to this, but walked off with his map.

Now that boy was no fool. I believe that he was just beginning to feel like doing something, and, as he had never done anything before, he did n't know how.

About twelve o'clock we reached the mouth of the Savannah (without turning back), and sailed twenty miles up the river to the city.

We were the first two persons off that vessel, and we took a hack to the hotel that the purser had recommended to us, and had the satisfaction of reaching it about ten minutes ahead of the people who came in the omnibus; although I don't know that that was of much use to us, as the clerk gave us top rooms, any way.

We went pretty nearly all over Savannah that afternoon and the next day. It's a beautiful city. There is a little public square at nearly every corner, and one of the wide streets has a double row of big trees running right down the middle of it, with grass under them, and, what seemed stranger yet, the trees were all in leaf, little children were playing on the grass, and the weather was warm and splendid. The gardens in front of the houses were full of roses and all sorts of flowers in blossom, and Rectus wanted to buy a straw-hat and get his linen trousers out of his trunk.

"No, sir," said I; "I'm not going around with a fellow wearing a straw-hat and linen breeches in January. You don't see anybody else wearing them."

"No," said he; "but it's warm enough."

"You may think so," I answered; "but I guess they know their own business best. This is their coldest season, and if they wore straw-hats and linen clothes now, what would they put on when the scorching hot weather comes?"

Rectus did n't know, and that matter was dropped. There is a pretty park at the back of the town, and we walked about it, and sat under the trees, and looked at the flowers, and the fountain playing, and enjoyed it ever so much. If it had been summer, and we had been at home, we should n't have cared so much for these things; but sitting under trees, and lounging about over the green grass,

while our folks at home were up to their eyes, or thereabouts, in snow and ice, delighted both of us, especially Rectus. I never heard him talk so much.

We reached Savannah on Tuesday, and were to leave in the steamer for St. Augustine Thursday afternoon. Thursday morning we went out to the cemetery of Bonaventure, one of the loveliest places in the whole world, where there are long avenues of live-oaks that stretch from one side of the road to



"THE WHOLE PLACE SEEMED DRIPPING WITH WAVING FRINGE."

the other like great covered arbors, and from every limb of every tree hang great streamers of gray moss four and five feet long. It was just wonderful to look at. The whole place seemed dripping with waving fringe. Rectus said it looked to him as if this was a grave-yard for old men, and that every old fellow had had to hang his beard on a tree before he went down into his grave.

This was a curious idea for Rectus to have, and the colored man who was driving us—we went out in style, in a barouche, but I would n't do that kind of thing again without making a bargain beforehand—turned around to look at him as if he thought he was a little crazy. Rectus was certainly in high spirits. There was a sort of change coming over him. His eyes had a sparkle in them that I never saw before. No one could say that he did n't take interest in things now. I think the warm weather had something to do with it.

"I tell you what it is, Gordon," said he,—he still called me Gordon, and I did n't insist on

"Mr.," because I thought that, on the whole, perhaps it would n't do,—"I'm waking up. I feel as if I had been asleep all my life, and was just beginning to open my eyes."

A grave-yard seemed a queer place to start out fresh in this way, but it was n't long before I found that if Rectus had n't really wakened up he could kick pretty hard in his sleep.

Nothing much happened on the trip down to St. Augustine, for we traveled nearly all the way by night. Early the next morning we were lying off that old half-Spanish town, wishing the tide would rise so that we could go in. There is a bar between two islands that lie in front of the town, and you have to go over that to get into the harbor. We were on the "Tigris," the Bahama steamer, that touched at St. Augustine on her way to Nassau, and she could n't get over that bar until high-tide. We were dreadfully impatient, for we could see the old town, with its trees, all green and bright, and its low, wide houses, and a great light-house, marked like a barber's pole or a stick of old-fashioned mint-candy, and what was best of all, a splendid old castle, or fort, built by the Spaniards three hundred years ago! We declared we would go there the moment we set foot on shore. In fact we soon had about a dozen plans for seeing the town.

If we had been the pilots, we would have bumped that old steamer over the bar, somehow or other, long before the real pilot started her in; but we had to wait. When we did go in, and steamed along in front of the old fort, we could see that it was gray and crumbling and moss-covered, in places, and it was just like an oil-painting. The whole town, in fact, was like an oil-painting, to us.

The moment the stairs were put down, we scuffled ashore, and left the steamer to go on to the Bahamas whenever she felt like it. We gave our valises and trunk-checks to a negro man with a wagon, and told him to take the baggage to a hotel that we could see from the wharf, and then we started off for the fort. But on my way along the wharf I made up my mind that as the fort had been there for three hundred years, it would probably stand a while longer, and that we had better go along with our baggage, and see about getting a place to live in, for we were not going to be in any hurry to leave St. Augustine.

We did n't go to any hotel at all. I had a letter of introduction to a Mr. Cholott, and on our way up from the wharf, I heard some one call out that name to a gentleman. So I remembered my letter, and went up and gave it to him. He was a first-rate man, and when we told him where we were going,

we had quite a talk, and he said he would advise us to go to a boarding-house. It would be cheaper, and if we were like most boys that he knew, we'd like it better. He said that board could be had with several families that he knew, and that some of the Minorcans took boarders in the winter.

Of course, Rectus wanted to know, right away, what a Minorcan was. I did n't think it was exactly the place to ask questions which probably had long answers, but Mr. Cholott did n't seem to be in a hurry, and he just started off and told us about the Minorcans.

A chap, called Turnbull, more than a hundred years ago, brought over to Florida a lot of the natives of the island of Minorca, in the Mediterranean, and began a colony. But he was a mean sort of chap; he did n't care for anything but making money out of the Minorcans, and it was n't long before they found it out, for he was really making slaves of them. So they just rose up and rebelled and left old Turnbull to run his colony by himself. Served him right, too. They started off on their own accounts, and most of them came to this town, where they settled, and have had a good time ever since. There are a great many of them here now, descendants of the original Minorcans, and they keep pretty much together and keep their old name, too. They look a good deal like Spaniards, Mr. Cholott said, and many of them are very excellent people.

Rectus took the greatest interest in these Minorcans, but we did n't take board with any of them. We went to the house of a lady who was a friend of Mr. Cholott, and she gave us a splendid room, that looked right out over the harbor. We could see the islands, and the light-house, and the bar with the surf outside, and even get a glimpse of the ocean. We saw the "Tigris" going out over the bar. The captain wanted to get out on the same tide he came in on, and he did n't lose any time. As soon as she got fairly out to sea, we hurried down, to go to the fort. But first, Rectus said, we ought to go and buy straw-hats. There were lots of men with



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straw-hats in St. Augustine. This was true, for it was just as warm here as we have it in June, and we started off to look for a straw-hat store.

We found that we were in one of the queerest towns in the world. Rectus said it was all backstreets, and it looked something that way. The streets were very narrow, and none of them had any pavement but sand and powdered shell, and very few had any sidewalks. But they did n't seem to be needed. Many of the houses had balconies on the second story, which reached toward each other from both sides of the street, and this gave the town a sociable appearance. There were lots of shops, and most of them sold sea-beans. There were other things, like alligators' teeth, and shells, and curiosities, but the great trade of the town seemed to be in sea-beans.* Rectus and I each bought one, for our watch-chains.

I think we tried on every straw-hat in town, and we bought a couple in a little house, where two or three young women were making them. Rectus asked me, in a low voice, if I did n't think one of the young women was a Mohican. I hushed him up, for it was none of his business if she was. I had a good deal of trouble making Rectus say "Minorcan." Whenever we had met a dark-haired person, he had said to me: "Do you think that is a Mohican?" It was a part of his old school disposition to get things wrong in this way. But he never got angry when I corrected him. His temper was perfect.

I bought a common-sized hat, but Rectus bought one that spread out far and wide. It made him look like a Japanese umbrella. We stuffed our felt hats into our pockets, and started for the fort. But I looked at my watch and found it was supper-time. I had suspected it when I came out of the hat-shop. The sea-trip and the fine air here had given us tremendous appetites, which our walk had sharpened.

So we turned back at once and hurried home, agreeing to begin square on the fort the next day.

CHAPTER IV. TO THE RESCUE.

THE next morning I was awakened by Rectus coming into the room.

"Hello!" said I; "where have you been? I did n't hear you get up."

"I called you once or twice," said Rectus; "but you were sleeping so soundly, I thought I'd let you

alone. I knew you'd lost some sleep by being sick on the steamer."

"That was only the first night," I exclaimed. "I've made up that long ago. But what got you up so early?"

"I went out to take a warm salt-water bath before breakfast," answered Rectus. "There's an eight-cornered bath-house right out here, almost under the window, where you can have your seawater warm if you like it."



"HOW?"

"Do they pump it from the tropics?" I asked, as I got up and began to dress.

"No; they heat it in the bath-house. I had a first-rate bath, and I saw a Minorcan."

"You don't say so!" I cried. "What was he like? Had he horns? And how did you know what he was?"

"I asked him," said Rectus.

"Asked him!" I exclaimed. "You don't mean to say that you got up early and went around asking people if they were Mohicans!"

"Minorcans, I said."

"Well, it's bad enough, even if you got the

* Sea-beans are seeds of a West Indian tree. They are of different colors, very hard, and capable of being handsomely polished. They are called "sea-beans" because great numbers of them drift up on the Florida and adjacent coasts.

name right. Did you ask the man plump to his face?"

"Yes. But he first asked me what I was. He was an oldish man, and I met him just as I was coming out of the bath-house. He had a basket of clams on his arm, and I asked him where he caught them. That made him laugh, and he said he dug them out of the sand under the wharf. Then he asked me if my name was Cisneros, and when I told him it was not, he said that I looked like a Spaniard, and he thought that that might be my name. And so, as he had asked me about myself, I asked him if he was a Minorcan, and he said 'yes.'"

"And what then?" I asked.

"Nothing," said Rectus. "He went on with his clams, and I came home."

"You did n't seem to make much out of him, after all," said I. "I don't wonder he thought you were a Spaniard, with that hat. I told you you'd make a show of yourself. But what are you going to do with your Minorcans, Rectus, when you catch them?"

He laughed, but did n't mention his plans.

"I did n't know how you got clams," he said. "I thought you caught them some way. It would never have entered my head to dig for them."

"There's lots to learn in this town about fish, and ever so many other things besides; and I tell you what it is, Rectus, as soon as we get through with the fort,—and I don't know how long that will take us, for I heard on the steamer that it had under-ground dungeons,—we'll go off on a first-class exploring expedition."

That suited Rectus, exactly.

After breakfast we started for the fort. It is just outside of the town, and you can walk all the way on the sea-wall, which is about a yard wide on top,—just a little too wide for one fellow, but not quite wide enough for two.

The United States government holds the fort now, of course, and calls it Fort Marion, but the old Spanish name was San Marco, and we disdained to call it anything else. When we went over the draw-bridge, and across the moat, we saw the arms of Spain on a shield over the great gate of the fort. We walked right in, into a wide hall, with dark door-ways on each side, and then out into a great inclosed space, like a parade-ground, in the center of the fort, and here we saw a whole crowd of Indians. We did n't expect to find Indians here, and we were very much surprised. They did not wear Indian clothes, but were dressed in United States military uniform. They did n't look like anything but Indians, though, for all that. I asked one of them if he belonged here, and he smiled and said "How?" and held out his hand.

We both shook it, but could make nothing out of him. A good many of them now came up and said "How" to us, and shook hands, and we soon found that this meant "How d' ye do?" and was about all they knew of English.

We were lucky enough, before we got through shaking hands with our new friends, to see Mr. Cholott coming toward us, and he immediately took us in charge, and seemed to be glad to have a job of the kind. There was nothing about the fort that he did n't know. He told us that the Indians were prisoners, taken in the far West by United States troops, and that some of them were the worst Indians in the whole country. They were safe enough now, though, and were held here as hostages. Some were chiefs, and they were all noted men,—some as murderers, and others in less important ways. They had been here for some years, and a few of them could speak a little English.

He then took us all over the fort,—up an inclined plane to the top of the ramparts, and into the Indian barracks on one of the wide walls, where we saw a lot of Cheyennes and Kiowas, and Indians from other tribes, sitting around and making bows and arrows, and polishing sea-beans to sell to visitors. At each corner of the fort was a "look-out tower,"—a little box of a place, stuck out from the top of the wall, with loop-holes, and a long, narrow passage leading to it, with a high wall on each side to protect from bullets and arrows the man who went to look out. One of the towers had been knocked off, probably by a cannon-ball. These towers and slim little passages took our fancy greatly. Then Mr. Cholott took us down-stairs to see the dungeons. He got the key and gave it to a big old Indian, named Red Horse, who went ahead with a lighted kerosene lamp.

We first saw the dungeon where the Indian chief, Osceola, was shut up during the Seminole war. It was a dreary place. There was another chief, Wild Cat, who was imprisoned with Osceola, and one night Osceola "boosted" him to a high window, where he squeezed through the bars and got away. If Osceola had had any one to give him a lift, I suppose he would have been off too. Rectus and I wondered how the two Indians managed this little question of who should be hoisted. Perhaps they tossed up, or perhaps Wild Cat was the lighter of the two. The worst dungeon, though, was a place that was discovered by accident about thirty years ago. There was nothing there when we went in; but, when it was first found, a chained skeleton was lying on the floor. Through a hole in the wall we crept into another dungeon, worse yet, in which two iron cages were found hung to the wall, with skeletons in them. It seemed like being in some

other country to stand in this dark little dungeon, and hear these dreadful stories, while a big Indian stood grinning by, holding a kerosene lamp.

Mr. Cholott told us that one of the cages and the bones could now be seen in Washington.

After Mr. Cholott went home, we tramped all over the fort again by ourselves, and that afternoon we sat on the outer wall that runs along the harbor-front of the fort, and watched the sail-boats and the fishermen in their "dug-outs." There were a couple of sharks swimming up and down in front of the town, and every now and then they would come up and show themselves. They were the first sharks we had ever seen.

Rectus was worked up about the Indians. We had been told that, while a great many of the chiefs and braves imprisoned here were men known to have committed crimes, still there were others who

been thinking a good deal about them, and their bold escape from slavery, and their ——

"Slavery!" sung out the old man. "We were never slaves! What do you mean by that? Do you take us for niggers?"

He was pretty mad and I don't wonder, if that was the way he understood Rectus, for he was just as much a white man as either of us.

"Oh no!" said Rectus. "But I've heard all about you, and that tyrant Turnbull, and the way you cast off his yoke. I mean your fathers, of course."

"I reckon you've heard a little too much, young man," said the Minorcan. "Somebody's been stuffin' you. You'd better get a hook and line, and go out to catch clams."

"Why, you don't understand me!" cried Rectus. "I honor you for it!"



"SAN MARCO."

had done nothing wrong, and had been captured and brought here as prisoners, simply because, in this way, the government would have a good hold on their tribes.

Rectus thought this was the worst kind of injustice, and I agreed with him, although I did n't see what we were going to do about it.

On our way home we met Rectus's Minorcan; he was a queer old fellow.

"Hello!" said he, when he saw Rectus. "Have you been out catching clams?"

We stopped and talked a little while about the sharks, and then the old man asked Rectus why he wanted to know, that morning, whether he was a Minorcan or not.

"I just wanted to see one," said Rectus, as if he had been talking of kangaroos or giraffes. "I've

The old man looked at him and then at me, and then he laughed. "All right, bub," said he. "If ever you want to hire a boat, I've got one. My name's Menendez. Just ask for my boat at the club-house wharf." And then he went on.

"That's all you get for your sympathy with oppressed people," said Rectus. "They call you bub."

"Well, that old fellow is n't oppressed," I said; "and if any of his ancestors were, I don't suppose he cares about remembering it. We ought to hire his boat, some time."

That evening we took a walk along the sea-wall. It was a beautiful star-light night, and a great many people were walking about. When we got down near the fort,—which looked bigger and grayer than ever, by the star-light,—Rectus said he would

like to get inside of it by night, and I agreed that it would be a good thing to do. So we went over the draw-bridge (this place has a draw-bridge, and portcullises, and barbicans, and demi-lunes, and a moat, just as if it were a castle or a fort of some old country in Europe),—but the big gate was shut. We did n't care to knock, for all was dark, and we came away. Rectus proposed that we should reconnoiter the place, and I agreed, although, in reality, there was n't anything to reconnoiter. We went down into the moat, which was perfectly dry, and very wide, and walked all around the fort.

We examined the walls, which were pretty jagged and rough in some places, and we both agreed that if we *had* to do it, we believed we could climb to the top.

As we walked home, Rectus proposed that we should try to climb in some night.

"What's the good?" I asked.

"Why, it would be a splendid thing," said he, "to scale the walls of an old Middle-Age fort, like that. Let's try it, anyway."

I could n't help thinking that it would be rather a fine thing to do, but it did seem rather foolish to risk our necks to get over the walls at night, when we could walk in, whenever we pleased, all day.

But it was of no use to say anything like that to Rectus. He was full of the idea of scaling the walls, and I found that when the boy did get worked up to anything, he could talk first-rate, and before we went to sleep I got the notion of it, too, and we made up our minds that we would try it.

The next day we walked around the walls two or three times, and found a place where we thought we could get up, if we had a rope fastened to the top of the wall. When General Oglethorpe bombarded the fort,—at the time the Spaniards held it,—he made a good many dents in the wall, and these would help us. I did climb up a few feet, but we saw that it would never do to try to get all the way up without a rope.

How to fasten the rope on the top of the wall was the next question. We went in the fort, and found that if we could get a stout grapnel over the wall, it would probably catch on the inside of the coping, and give us a good enough hold. There is a wide walk on top, with a low wall on the outside, just high enough to shelter cannon, and to enable the garrison to dodge musketry and arrows.

We had a good deal of trouble finding a rope, but we bought one, at last, which was stout enough,—the man asked us if we were going to fish for sharks, and did n't seem to believe us when we said no,—and we took it to our room, and made knots in it about a foot apart. The fort walls are about twenty feet high, and we made the rope plenty

long enough, with something to spare. We did n't have much trouble to find a grapnel. We bought a small one, but it was strong enough. We talked the matter over a great deal, and went to the fort several times, making examinations, and measuring the height of the wall, from the top, with a spool of cotton.



MAIDEN'S HEART.

It was two or three days before we got everything ready, and in our trips to the fort we saw a good deal of the Indians. We often met them in the town, too, for they were frequently allowed to go out and walk about by themselves. There was no danger, I suppose, of their trying to run away, for they were several thousand miles from their homes, and they probably would not care to run to any other place, with no larger stock of the English language than the one word "How?" Some of them, however, could talk a little English. There was one big fellow—he was probably the largest of them all—who was called "Maiden's Heart." I could n't see how his name fitted, for he looked like an out-and-out savage, and generally wore a grin that seemed wicked enough to frighten settlers out of his part of the country. But he may have had a tender spot, somewhere, which entitled him to his name, and he was certainly very willing to talk to us, to the extent of his ability, which was not very great. We managed, however, to have some interesting, though rather choppy, conversations.

There was another fellow, a young chief, called

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Crowded Owl, that we liked better than any of the others, although we could n't talk to him at all. He was not much older than I was, and so seemed to take to us. He would walk all around with us, and point out things. We had bought some sea-beans of him, and it may be that he hoped to sell us some more. At any rate, he was very friendly.

We met Mr. Cholott several times, and he told us of some good places to go to, and said he'd take us out fishing before long. But we were in no hurry for any expedition until we had carried out our little plan of surprising the fort. I gave the greater part of our money, however, to Mr. Cholott to lock up in his safe. I did n't like old Mr. Colbert's plan of going about with your capital pinned to your pockets. It might do while we were traveling, but I would rather have had it in drafts or something else not easily lost.

We had a good many discussions about our grapnel. We did not know whether there was a sentinel on duty in the fort at night or not, but supposed there was, and, if so, he would be likely to hear the grapnel when we threw it up and it hit the stones. We thought we could get over this difficulty by wrapping the grapnel in cotton wool. This would deaden the sound when it struck, but would not prevent the points of the hooks from holding to the inner edge of the wall. Everything now seemed all right, except that we had no object in view after we got over the wall. I always like to have some reason for doing a thing, especially when it's pretty hard to do. I said this to Rectus, and he agreed with me.

"What I would like to do," said he, "would be to benefit the innocent Indian prisoners."

"I don't know what we can do for them," said I. "We can't let them out, and they'd all go back again if we did."

"No, we can't do that," said he; "but we ought to do something. I've been around looking at them all carefully, and I feel sure that there are at least forty men among those Indians who have n't done a thing to warrant shutting them up."

"Why, how do you know?" I exclaimed.

"I judge from their faces," said Rectus.

Of course this made me laugh, but he did n't care.

"I'll tell you what we could do," said he; "we could enter a protest that might be heard of, and do some good. We could take a pot of black paint and a brush with us, and paint on one of the doors that open into the inner square,—where everybody could see it,—something like this: 'Let the righteous Indian go free.' That would create talk, and something might be done."

"Who'd do it?" said I. "The captain in command could n't. He has no power to let any of them go free."

"Well, we might address the notice to the President of the United States—in big black letters. They could not conceal such a thing."

"Well, now, look here, Rectus," said I; "this thing is going to cost too much money. That rope was expensive, and the grapnel cost a good deal more than we thought it would; and now you want a big pot of black paint. We must n't spend our money too fast, and if we've got to economize, let's begin on black paint. You can write your proclamation on paper, and stick it on the door with tacks. They could send that easier to the President than they could send a whole door."

"You may make as much fun as you please," said Rectus, "but I'm going to write it out now."

And so he did, in big letters, on half a sheet of foolscap.

(To be continued.)

CAN YOU?

BY MARY E. FOLSOM.

CAN you make a rose or a lily,—just one?
Or catch a beam of the golden sun?
Can you count the rain-drops as they fall?
Or the leaves that flutter from tree-tops tall?
Can you run like the brook and never tire?
Can you climb like the vine beyond the spire?
Can you fly like a bird, or weave a nest,
Or make but one feather on robin's breast?

Can you build a cell like the bee, or spin
Like the spider, a web so fine and thin?

Can you lift a shadow from off the ground?
Can you see the wind, or measure a sound?
Can you blow a bubble that will not burst?
Can you talk with echo and not speak first?

Oh, my dear little boy! you are clever and strong,
And you are so busy the whole day long,
Trying as hard as a little boy can
To do big things like a "grown-up" man!
Look at me, darling! I tell you true,
There are some things you never can do.

CHICKEN LIZZIE.

BY L. DUYKWOOD.

LIZZIE'S father was dead. He had been a troublesome man; so now Lizzie's mother said:

"We've no one to hinder us; let's pack up our bundles and travel."

"That will be delightful!" answered Lizzie.

So they started off, and as long as the mother's savings lasted her, they journeyed in the cars, or by the boat, or in a cart. When the money was nearly gone, they walked. At last, they came to a queer little village, and on a common at one end, with a small garden fenced in around it, stood a little empty brown cottage.

"This is the very village and the very house where I should like to live," said Lizzie's mother.

"I, too," said Lizzie.

So, by inquiring, they soon found the owner. Lizzie's mother arranged to take in washing and pay every week so much for her cottage. The very next day they bought a bed, a pot and a pan, pasted brown paper in the broken window-panes, and were all settled comfortably, when Lizzie pinned upon the walls some colored pictures she had received in Sunday-school.

"Now if we only had a few chickens," said the mother; "they are so useful, and such friends! I have a little money left; so, Lizzie, take a slice of bread-and-molasses in your little basket, and right after breakfast to-morrow go and see if you can buy some anywhere. But be sure to be home at dinner-time, or I shall think you are lost."

Next day, Lizzie started off in her little gray dress, with her little basket on her arm. She walked a long distance on the country-road, and at last came to a lonely white cottage, behind which stood a barn and a hen-house, while all about walked any number of chickens of many varieties. Lizzie crept in under the fence and sat down on a stone to watch them.

By and by, thinking it might be getting late, she went to the kitchen door and knocked. She knocked till she was tired, but no one answered her.

"They may be in the parlor," she said to herself, and went around to pound on the front door. Still no one took the least notice of her presence. Lizzie felt rather puzzled, but supposing there must be yet another entrance, she went to the rear of the house to look for it. There she found a green door with a stone step, and, close by, a hoghead full of water under the spout. On this door she thumped,—first softly, then louder and louder.

"Why don't you come, you deaf things?" said Lizzie, aloud.

She was answered by a long-drawn "mieauw!" Starting back, she almost stepped on a large gray cat, who looked at her hard for a moment out of his fierce yet languishing green eyes, and then sitting down on the door-stone, folded his tail about him and went to sleep. Lizzie stood and looked at him, and once in a while he opened his eyes straight on her. But he never moved, and she did not like to reach over him to knock again.

Lizzie reflected a moment, and then opened the little gate that led into the poultry-yard. She looked back as she went in, and saw the green-eyed cat staring at her; but his eyes closed at once, as Lizzie shut the gate behind her.

In the middle of the yard stood a can. Lizzie lifted it, and found it was an oil-can. "What a queer place for it!" she thought. "As there seems to be nobody to see to it, I'll move it to one side, where it will not be knocked over." Near the oil-can was a small tub of water. That was for the chickens to drink from. All about, in every direction, walked the chickens—except some who were shut up in coops, and some who were still cackling inside the hen-house.

Lizzie flattened her nose against one of the windows of the hen-house, and tried to see what was going on; but the glass was too dirty. Then she made an attempt to poke her head in at the hole in the door which the hens went through; but a hen who wanted to get out just then, flew against her face, nearly blinding her; so she was glad to give it up.

Hearing pigs, she went in search of them, and almost stepped into their sty, which, unfenced, was just a hollow place dug down a few feet below the ground. The pigs seemed wild with hunger, and quite active enough to jump out at her; so Lizzie made haste away from them also.

"Perhaps there is some one in the barn," she thought, but found that as silent as the house, except for an old white hen in the hay-loft, who jumped off her nest uneasily at Lizzie's approach, and threw herself to the ground; but without breaking her neck, as Lizzie had feared. As she stood still a moment inside the barn, there came a queer noise overhead that seemed rather alarming; but Lizzie was a wise girl, and went out at once to discover what it was. Looking toward the roof, she saw it was covered with pigeons walk-

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ing about in every direction, sometimes stooping under to get into their little houses; and when they stooped, a cross brown pigeon gave them each a push to make them fall off; but, fortunately, none did.

Lizzie looked around for a stone to throw at the brown pigeon; but just then it seemed to her she heard indistinct voices and footsteps coming nearer, and wondered what the family would think to see a strange child making herself at home in their poultry-yard. But in vain she looked about her for any human presence. The voices and footsteps died away suddenly, and there were only the busy, enterprising chickens searching for food, or rushing in and out of the hen-house; and there were the sad or lazy ones shut up in coops, or squatting in holes they had made in preparation for a short nap. There were the pigeons pattering above her head; and when she looked over the gate, there sat the gray and green cat, staring and sleeping on the door-stone.

"I'm sure I heard voices and steps," said Lizzie, half aloud.

The cat miauw-ed just then, and directly after, one of the roosters gave a loud crow. All the other fowls who were able followed his example in quick succession.

"That's a beautiful noise!" thought Lizzie. "I wish I could crow, too; but I am afraid they would laugh at me if I tried. I think I'd better eat my bread, and then, if no one comes, I'll go home."

Lizzie now found a comfortable stone, and sat down to lunch. Directly in front of her rose a small heap of stones shaped very regularly, like an old-fashioned rocklet, only without the earth or vines. This mound puzzled her all the time she was eating, and she could not make up her mind as to its use. When she had finished, she started up and walked around the house, peeping into the three windows as she passed. At the first, she saw a pig's face within, close to the pane, but it vanished as she approached. Lizzie went backward and forward several times, always with the same effect.

"Well," she concluded, feeling a little queer, "I don't see why they should keep a pet pig instead of a pet dog or a pet baby; but it certainly is a pig. I don't like pigs, and I sha'n't go near it."

So she passed that window and went to the next, where there was clearly nothing but a pot of flowers; but at the third stood a woman in a white apron, with a red bow at her neck. She, too, vanished as Lizzie came nearer.

"She has heard me at last, and gone to open the door!" was Lizzie's first thought.

But the door did not open; and when Lizzie walked backward and forward, the woman appeared and disappeared, just as the little pig had done.

Lizzie gave a little shiver, and, looking behind her as she ran, she took refuge on the front door-step. While she stood there reflecting, some people drove by in a cart. As soon as they saw Lizzie, they pointed at her and laughed, and looked over their shoulders, laughing and pointing at her as long as they were in sight.

"Is anything the matter with me?" thought Lizzie, examining herself all over. "No! Well, then, is there anything the matter with the house? I don't see anything," she said to herself, shaking her head as she stood off to examine it, "unless they were laughing at the woman and the pig."

She stood still a long while thinking, and then concluding it must be late, she started for home, determining to come again next day and see if any one would appear to explain matters.

The sun, which had been clouded, shone out; the fascinated yet dreary feeling which had oppressed her fell off as she left the silent house behind her, and hastened to meet her mother.

On the next day, this persevering girl started off, as before, directly after breakfast, in her little gray dress, and with her little basket on her arm, containing this time two slices of bread-and-molasses instead of one, in case she should stay later at the silent house. When she arrived there, everything seemed the same as on the day before. In fact, she could hardly help thinking it was the day before, and that she had never gone home since the first visit.

The oil-can which she had moved so carefully was now back again in the middle of the yard. The cross, brown pigeon stood at the edge of the roof to push the others off; the pigs seemed as wildly expectant as at first; the gray and green cat stared and went to sleep on the door-stone; the chickens were still occupied in getting a living, or, perhaps, fattening themselves to suit other tastes.

The flower-pot, the little pig, and the obstinate woman blocked up the windows as before. Every one still seemed deaf to her knocking; and when she finally went to the front of the house, some people passing by in a cart laughed and pointed at her till they vanished below the hill in the road.

Lizzie stood awhile with her mouth and eyes wide open, and then she started for home, which she reached at about the middle of the afternoon.

More than ever curious and determined, Lizzie on the third morning left home after breakfast in her little gray dress, with her little basket on her arm, in which this time there were three slices of

bread-and-molasses, in case she should not return before supper. Nothing was changed at the silent house, and Lizzie spent the day exactly as she had spent the former two.

At last, the sun set, twilight came on, and when it began to grow dark, Lizzie, tired with her wanderings, fell sound asleep, with her head against the fence of the chicken-yard.

She was awakened by a bright light and a burst of music. She stared in amazement, for the mysterious house had become a gorgeous palace, the barn was a stately castle, the hen-house a fantastic pavilion, and the heap of stones a dancing-hall, beautiful as a Greek temple, and lit with thousands of lamps and Chinese lanterns. Instead of a chicken-yard, she was standing in a garden laid out with every beauty of art and nature. Before her, where the oil-can had so obstinately stood itself, a cool fountain, glimmering in the moon-shine, shot softly into the air. A little to the right, the tub of water was represented by a placid lake, on which were a number of little boats filled with ladies and gentlemen, who, as the music struck up, were landing hurriedly and walking toward the dancing-hall.

Lizzie was thinking where she could hide herself, when a tall young man in a gray suit, with a savage moustache, came up to her and asked her to dance the "Lancers" with him. Not daring to refuse, she accepted his arm, and followed the procession to the dancing-hall. She had no idea of the different figures, and made so many mistakes that her partner grew quite angry. Something in the glare of his eyes made Lizzie think of the cat on the door-stone, and, looking stealthily behind him, she noticed a number of times that his coat-tails seemed as if they moved uneasily; and when Lizzie put her set entirely out by her ignorance of the grand chain, the coat-tails were so agitated that he was obliged to move away from the column near which he was standing. Directly after, he seized hold of an awkward-looking young man in a suit of white linen and yellow shoes, and said in so loud a whisper that Lizzie overheard him:

"You've got to waltz with this girl. She's a perfect idiot."

Then he walked off, and the other young man made Lizzie a very shy bow, and came and stood by her. After a few minutes, they got on very well. He told Lizzie he did not like to waltz, because every one knocked against him, and proposed that they should promenade in the garden. Lizzie consented, and was quite comfortable, till a heavy fellow in a plaid suit, with dreadful red hair, and spurs on his boots, came toward them, and saying roughly, "It is my turn now," carried her off to the ball-room.

Both these gentlemen had one striking peculiarity, which was, that they never began or ended a sentence without making a noise that sounded like k-r-r-r, and then choking it down, either as if they had the hiccough badly or were trying not to crow. Lizzie was anxious to get away from this last partner, for he was so rough, and pulled her around so that her breath was all gone; and, finally, his spurs caught in her dress, and tore the whole hem off. He thought this accident was all Lizzie's fault, and left her very much disgusted.

The dancing had now stopped, and the musicians were playing a march, while the company promenaded toward the pavilion. As they were passing Lizzie, a gentleman offered her his arm. She took it, and examined him as she followed the procession to the pavilion, where a table was elegantly set out with supper and flowers. He was an immensely stout young man with small eyes, and a hoarse cold that obliged him every few minutes to make a grunting noise in his throat. She was not pleased with his appearance, and still less with his conduct at supper. After leaving his partner for some time, he returned, swallowing the last morsel of something which had made his face greasy. He offered Lizzie a heaped-up plate, and grunted savagely as he whispered to her, "It's chicken salad—and very nice." The bashful young man in white happened to be near Lizzie. He gave a great start, and looked at her when her partner made this remark. Lizzie thought perhaps he was afraid to get himself some supper, and kindly offered him her plate. The poor young man gave her a reproachful glance, and then walked away, much to her astonishment.

Her partner disappeared suddenly every few minutes, and came back, eating, to offer her some other dish. At one time he seemed in a happy state over some ice-cream. "It's frozen custard," said he, "and custard is made from eggs." A stout woman sitting near him, in a speckled brown dress, became so agitated as he said this, that he nearly choked himself in fits of laughter.

At intervals, during the supper, a lady in white, with a ruby cross hung round her neck, and a bouquet in one hand, walked up and down the room, leading a little boy that Lizzie thought would have been pretty if his eyes had been larger, and if he had not looked so dreadfully stuffed. He was elegantly dressed, and every now and then the lady would stop before the table and feed him coaxingly with some dainty. At last he complained of headache, and was carried away by the white lady.

Lizzie was glad when the supper came to an end, but she was obliged to walk back to the hall without her partner, who was sitting in a corner eating and drinking, quite forgetful of her.

She was standing alone in the ball-room, when she heard a little man, in brown, saying crossly to a young lady in white :

"I don't care if I *am* engaged to be married to

"I can't," said she.

"I'll teach you in a minute," said the brown man.

Lizzie continued to refuse and he to insist. They were still disputing when the freshly scented morning air blew across the garden through the hall. At that instant, the man in a plaid suit, with spurs, who was on the other side of Lizzie, stuck his arms against his sides and gave such a terrific "Cut-cut-karakut!" that Lizzie was nearly shaken out of her shoes. His call was answered from all directions, and in a moment everything was in confusion, while crowing, clucking, grunting, cooing, and a deep mieauw, were mingled with bursts of laughter from the musicians, the upsetting of the furniture,



LIZZIE IN THE DANCING-HALL.

you. Do you think I must stick to you all the time? Let me go; I want to dance with that gray girl!"

The poor young lady in white subsided, and the man in brown first trod on Lizzie's toes, and then asked her to dance.

and the tearing and scrambling of all the company to rush away somewhere.

Lizzie rushed with the rest, and hiding herself in a corner, as soon as everything was quiet fell asleep.

When she awoke it was day and the sun was

shining. "Well, it's about time," she thought, "to wake out of this dream." Just then, seeing a grain of corn near by, she ran to it, picked it up with her mouth, and swallowed it whole. Then she stood still, and turned her head to one side to think. "That was a queer thing to do," she said to herself; "can it be I am at all like a chicken?"

She ran to the tub of water, and, looking in, saw reflected as plump and pretty a little gray chicken as you could find anywhere. "Oh! my little gray dress!" thought Lizzie; "how well it takes!"—as if she had been looking at her photograph. "But how angry I should have been if any one had dared to tell me I should ever become a chicken."

All that day Lizzie felt awkward, and rather homesick for her mother. On the next, she began to be

comfortable; and on the third, she asked herself, "Is my mother a chicken, or what is she?" After that she never remembered her old home. She attended the nightly balls with her enchanted companions, but knew no more about herself than about them, whether she was most animal and part human, or most human and part animal, which was rather unsatisfactory. So she remained a chicken, and enjoyed herself like other chickens.

If you walk far out into the country, you will come into a brown road, and by and by you will see a white house with a poultry-yard attached. There, if many chickens are running about, you will be sure to find a pretty little gray hen. That is the Lizzie chicken waiting for you, or for some one, to come and break her enchantment.



THE STUDENT.

KING ALFRED'S LANTERN.

BY AMANDA B. HARRIS.

DID you ever try to imagine, when you were studying the beginnings of English history, what kind of people those old Anglo-Saxons were, and how they lived? They were our far-off ancestors, and our language for the most part was made from theirs; in fact, we are called Anglo-Saxons ourselves; so we ought to be interested in them.

They were a rude people in many respects, and lived in a rude way, compared with ours. How would you like windows which had no glass in them,—very small windows, too,—but had oiled paper or sheets of horn instead? Of course the rooms must have been dark and dismal, you will

say. And what would you think of houses without chimneys, or anything *we* should call chimneys? But matters were really not much better, even in king's houses, about ten hundred years ago.

The most important room in those days was called the hall; and it was large enough to accommodate the family, the great company of servants, and all the guests who chose to come. They ate there, sat there, and most of them slept there, on rough benches, or rolled up in skins on the floor. It was open to every chance traveler, to the wandering harpers, to beggars, and everybody else.

The fire was built against a clay or stone arrange-

ment, answering for a fire-place, at one end, or on an immense stone hearth in the middle; and the smoke, after floating up overhead, found its way out through an opening or a kind of turret in the roof. At dark they heaped high the logs and fagots; and happy was he who on a stormy night could get near the blaze. When supper-time came, servants stood behind those at table and held torches over their heads till the meal was over; and when bed-time came, the guests who had any other place than the hall to sleep in were lighted to it in the same way.

As for the king, he was more privileged than that; though just what they first used for lights, and just when lamps became common among the Anglo-Saxons, it is not easy to find out. We see in some very old pictures a simple little lamp, shaped perhaps like a saucer, hung by chains at the side of the room, and holding, no doubt, a piece of wax or some kind of oil, with a strip of cloth in it for a wick. Sometimes, in the royal chambers, for a very long time after King Alfred's day, a light was kept by means of a cake of wax in a silver basin.

They knew how to make candles, however; but instead of putting one *in* a candlestick, it was put *on* it. The candlestick had a point at the top, called a spike, and the candle was made hollow at the bottom, and slipped down over the spike; one so fixed was known as a "pricket."

There is, among some illustrations of old customs, a picture of a candlestick, which is very queer though very elegant, and looks like a little piece of furniture. It is a tall stem rising from a three-footed, three-cornered stand, very much ornamented; it comes to a point at the top, and a little way below is a plate to hold the tallow or wax that might run down. We do not know that King Alfred had anything like this; but he had what nobody had ever seen before in that country, for he invented it himself, and that was a *lantern*.

This good king was a very busy man; the people around him might be willing to idle away their days over the fire, listening to the harpers, telling stories, and playing with the hounds, but he felt that he had a great work to do. He wanted to make his subjects more civilized, to teach them useful arts, and he had not an hour to waste. He built towns, he built ships; he read, and studied, and wrote,—and that was wonderful, indeed, in those days when there were but few books, and when even princes could not write their own names. He was the best, the wisest, and the most learned king that the Saxons had ever had.

He used to carry in his bosom "memorandum leaves, in which he made collections from his studies," and this journal he was in the habit of

examining so much that "he called it his *hand-book*." And, perhaps, that is where the word "hand-book" came from. Of course, he read far into the night, but he soon found two troubles,—



A SAXON LANTERN.

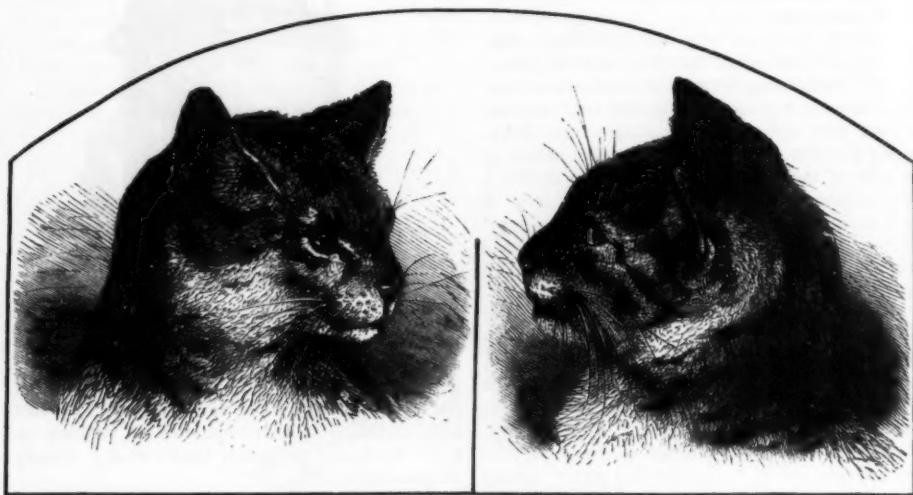
there was no way to mark the time, for there were no clocks nor watches then, and he could not keep a steady light, because the houses were so open that the wind came in from every quarter. He had noon-marks, but those amounted to nothing on rainy days; and everybody knows what a country England is for rain.

However, when such a man as Alfred makes up his mind to do a thing, he is almost sure to find a way. So he had a quantity of wax prepared, took enough of it to weigh down seventy-two silver pennies, and of it had six candles made, all weighing the same, and each twelve inches long, and marked off into twelve divisions. He planned so nicely that these six would burn twenty-four hours; and he always kept one lighted day and night before some holy relics and images of saints which he had, and which, being a very pious man, he carried about with his luggage wherever he went.

He would now have had not only tolerable light, but a very good way of marking the hours, if the candles had always been sure of burning a given time. But if the wind blew, the flame would flare, and perhaps go out; and the king made up his mind that there could be something done to remedy this,—and he did it. He made a frame-work, and fixed into it little plates or windows of horn, scraped so thin that the light could shine through, set his candle inside, and shut it in,—and the thing was done. He had a lantern, sure in all weathers. A very small affair it may seem to *you*, but it was a great one to *him*.

Overleaf is a picture of a Saxon lantern which may be almost like his, though it is probably an improvement on it; for no sooner does one man invent a thing, than another finds a way to make it better. This, in shape, makes one think of a bird-cage without the tray or railing. It has a kind of cupola-

like top, and is much ornamented; there are bands with bosses on them, looking like metal, around the bottom, the middle, and next to the roof; and there is a pretty arched door. Altogether, it is a very curious, but a rather clumsy and rather dark lantern.



THE TWO CHESHIRE CATS.

BY A. P. WILLIAMS.

SAID the first Chessy-cat to the second Chessy-cat:

"Did you ever see a Chessy-cat pout?"

Said the second Chessy-cat to the first Chessy-cat:

"Did you ever see an oyster walk about?"

Said the second Chessy-cat to the first Chessy-cat:

"Did you know that a Chessy-cat could grin?"

Said the first Chessy-cat to the second Chessy-cat:

"Did you know they made tin-dippers out of tin?"

Said the first Chessy-cat to the second Chessy-cat:

"Did you ever see a Chessy-cat cry?"

Said the second Chessy-cat to the first Chessy-cat:

"Did you ever see a snapping-turtle fly?"

Said the second Chessy-cat to the first Chessy-cat:

"Did you know that a Chessy-cat could smile?"

Said the first Chessy-cat to the second Chessy-cat:

"Did you know it took two halves to make a mile?"

Said the first Chessy-cat to the second Chessy-cat:

"Did you ever see a Chessy-cat weep?"

Said the second Chessy-cat to the first Chessy-cat:

"Did you ever see a weasel fast asleep?"

Said the second Chessy-cat to the first Chessy-cat:

"Did you know that a Chessy-cat could laugh?"

Said the first Chessy-cat to the second Chessy-cat:

"Did you know there were two quarters in a half?"

Said the first Chessy-cat to the second Chessy-cat:

"Did you ever see a Chessy-cat swoon?"

Said the second Chessy-cat to the first Chessy-cat:

"Did you ever teach an elephant a tune?"



ITALIAN FAIRY TALES.

BY T. F. CRANE.

I FEAR some of the readers of ST. NICHOLAS will exclaim, on reading the title of this article, "What, more fairy tales?" and will instantly suspect the writer of designing to pass off on them some moral lesson under the thin disguise of a story, or to puzzle their heads with some of the genuine marvels of science in masks of hobgoblins, kobolds and magicians.

But my fairy tales are *real* fairy tales.

"So much the worse," I hear some cry; "we know all the *real* fairy tales by heart. Are they not, after all, the same dear old stories where —?"

Yes, these stories are the same all the world over,

and that is just why they are attracting so much attention nowadays from learned men in every country who have been asking themselves the question some of you may have asked yourselves: "Why are they so like each other?"

I hope to show you that the more these stories of various countries resemble each other, the more valuable and interesting they are.

Some of the fairy tales that you have read are English,—like "Jack the Giant-killer;" some are French,—like "Puss in Boots" (where many of these French stories came from I will tell you presently); and the large majority, German; for every

child, almost, is acquainted with Grimm's "Household Stories," either in the German or the English version.

I dare say that many of you have read also Dasent's "Popular Tales, from the Norse," and Miss Frere's "Old Deccan Days, or Hindoo Fairy Tales." Those of you who are somewhat familiar with these charming books—one of which speaks for the extreme north of Europe, the other the south of Asia—can make your own comparisons, and will perhaps be surprised to see how close is the resemblance you thought only general and accidental.

I can mention briefly but two stories. You remember the story in Grimm of "Faithful John," and the young king whom he served so truly, and who went in search of the daughter of the King of the Golden Palace. You know the king carried off the princess and, as they were sailing home, Faithful John heard three crows relating certain dangers to which the royal pair would be exposed, and any one who saved them would be turned to stone. In spite of the prospect of this terrible fate, Faithful John saves his master and mistress and is changed into a statue. The king grieved for the loss of his trusty servant, and was told that he would restore him to life by sacrificing his own children. This the king did, and in the end recovered both his children and Faithful John, "and they lived happily together to the end of their days."

In Miss Frere's "Old Deccan Days," there is a story called "Rama and Luxman; or, The Learned Owl." In this tale two friends go in search of the beautiful princess whom the rajah's son, Rama, has seen in a dream. After many difficult exploits the prince wins his bride, and they start on their journey home. Luxman loved his friend the prince so greatly that he usually watched all night at the door of his tent, and one evening he heard two little owls chattering in a tree. They were relating to each other the story of Rama and Luxman's lives and adventures, and one of the owls foretold the dangers to which they must yet be exposed: a falling tree, an unsafe door-way, and a snake which threatens the life of Rama's bride. As in the German story, Luxman saves his friend's life and is turned to stone. The spell can only be broken by the touch of Rama's child. Years roll by before Rama has one, and then the parents watch anxiously for the moment when the child shall touch the statue. "But for three months they watch in vain. At last, one day, when the child was a year old, and was trying to walk, it chanced to be close to the statue, and, tottering on its unsteady feet, stretched out its tiny hands and caught hold of the foot of the statue. Then Luxman came to life instantly, and stooping down took into his arms the little baby who had rescued him, and kissed it."

A touching ending of a beautiful story, and one true in more ways than one, for many a heart as hard as stone has softened beneath the touch of a little child's hand!

Those of you who want to extend this comparison will find another remarkable resemblance between Dasent's story of "The Giant who had no Heart in his Body," and the Hindoo story of "Punchkin."

But you ask: "Which is the original and which is the imitation in these stories?" And I have to answer that all are equally original, or, rather, that all are children of a parent long since gone. And then I might give you a long, and tiresome account of the time when, ages ago, our ancestors dwelt in Central Asia, and amused themselves with the germs of the stories which now amuse you. But it is enough now to say that when this people left their home in Asia and came to Europe and settled there, they brought with them their customs and religious beliefs, many of which yet survive in children's games, and in the fairy stories we are talking about. You can now see, perhaps, why these familiar stories have a value besides the amusing of children who never heard the words "Indo-European" or "Folk-lore," and would not understand them, perhaps, if they did.

The oldest collections of fairy tales in Europe were made by two Italians, named Straparola and Basile, who lived during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The first fairy tale, which appeared in France over two hundred years ago, "The Clever Princess," was taken from Basile's collection which supplied Charles Perrault, afterward so celebrated for this kind of stories, with his "Cinderella." He is also indebted to Straparola for his "Puss in Boots;" so you see we owe some of our most popular stories—I mean, of course, their written form—to Italians. Since Straparola and Basile the Italians have almost entirely neglected this class of stories until within a few years, when learned scholars have made collections of them for a purely scientific purpose, and it is from some of these collections that I am going to give you a slight idea of the stories that entertain the people of Sicily and Tuscany. I have translated them directly from the Italian and Sicilian dialect, and as my object is not only to amuse you but also to add to your material for comparison between the stories of various countries, I shall give you old friends with new faces, and tell you the Italian "Cinderella" and the Sicilian "East o' the Sun and West o' the Moon."

The first story is from Palermo, in Sicily, and is called, "Lu Re d'Amuri," or, The King of Love.

Some of you will at once recognize its likeness to a class of stories of which the Norse tale of "East o' the Sun and West o' the Moon" is an excellent example, and some of you may perhaps see its

marked resemblance to the old story of "Cupid and Psyche," familiar to all students of mythology.



ROSELLA AND THE TURK.

Once upon a time there was a man with three daughters who earned his living by gathering wild herbs. One time he took his youngest daughter with him. They came to a garden and began to gather vegetables. The daughter saw a fine radish and began to pull it up, when suddenly a Turk* appeared, and said:

"Why have you opened my master's door? You must come in now, and he will decide on your punishment."

They went down into the ground, and when they were seated they saw a green bird come in and bathe in a pan of milk, then dry itself and become a handsome youth. He said to the Turk:

"What do these persons want?"

"Your Worship, they pulled up a radish and opened the subterranean door."

"How did we know," said the father, "that this was Your Excellency's house? My daughter saw a fine radish, it pleased her, and she pulled it up."

"Well, if that 's the case," said the master, "your daughter shall stay here as my wife; you may fill this sack with gold, and go; when you want to see your daughter, come and make yourself at home."

The father took leave of his daughter and departed.

When the master was alone with her, he said:

"You see, Rosella (Rusidda), you are mistress here," and gave her all the keys. She was perfectly happy (literally, "was happy to the hairs of her head").

One day, while the green bird was away, her sisters visited her and asked her about her husband. Rosella said she did not know, for he had made her promise not to try to find out who he was. Her sisters, however, persuaded her, and when the bird returned and became a man, Rosella put on a downcast air.

"What is the matter?" said her husband.

"Nothing," answered Rosella. She let him question her awhile, and, at last, said:

"Well, then, if you want to know why I am out of sorts, it is because I wish to know your name."

Her husband told her that it would be the worse for her, but she insisted on knowing his name. So he made her put the gold basins on a chair and began to bathe his feet.

"Rosella, do you really want to know my name?"

"Yes."

And the water came up to his waist, for he had become a bird and had got into the basin. Then he asked her the same question again, and again she answered yes, and the water was up to his mouth.

"Rosella, do you really want to know my name?"



ROSELLA AND THE GIANTS. (PAGE 105.)

* Turks or Saracens play an important part in Sicilian stories and traditions. The island of Sicily was conquered by the Saracens in A. D. 827, and occupied by them until the Norman conquest in the eleventh century.

"Yes, yes, yes!"

"Then know that I am called THE KING OF LOVE!"

And saying this he disappeared, and the basins and the palace disappeared likewise, and Rosella found herself alone out in an open plain without a soul to help her.* She called her servants, but no one answered her. Then she exclaimed:

"Since my husband has disappeared, I must wander about alone and forlorn to seek him!"

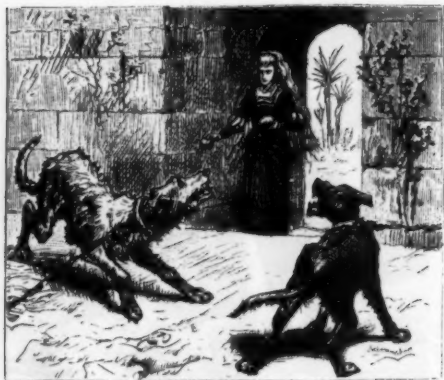
So she began her wanderings, and arrived at night in another lonely plain; then the poor girl felt her heart sink, and not knowing what to do, she exclaimed:

"Ah! King of Love,
You did it, and said it.
You disappeared from me in a golden basin,
And who will shelter to-night
This poor unfortunate one?"

When she had uttered these words an ogress appeared, and said: "Ah! wretch, how dare you go about seeking my nephew?" and was going to eat her up; but she took pity on her miserable state, and gave her shelter for the night. The next morning she gave her a piece of bread, and said:

"We are seven sisters, all ogresses, and the worst is your mother-in-law; look out for her!"

To be brief, the poor girl wandered about six days, and met all six of the ogresses, who treated her in the same way. The seventh day, in great



ROSSELLA GIVES BREAD TO THE DOGS.

distress, she uttered her usual lament, and the sister of the King of Love appeared and said: "Rosella, while my mother is out, come up!" and

* In the story of "Curid and Psyche" the wife does not see her husband, who comes to her only in the dark. In her curiosity to see his face she lights a wax taper, and a drop of melted wax falls on her sleeping husband who disappears, and whom she has to seek through many tasks and dangers. This is the interesting Norse story of "East of the Sun and West of the Moon." There is also in Sicilian a story which is what is called a variant (or different version) of the story we are giving above. It is called "Lu Re Cristallu," or "King Crystal," and in it a young girl marries a husband whose face she never sees. Her inquisitive sisters give her a wax candle, and tell her to light it when her husband is asleep, and see his face. This she does, but unfortunately drops some hot wax on her husband's nose, and he starts up, crying: "Treason! Treason!" and drives his prying wife out-of-doors. She cannot find her husband again until she has worn out a pair of iron shoes in her search.

lowered the braids of her hair and pulled her up. Then she gave her something to eat, and told her how to seize and pinch her mother until she cried out: "Let me alone for the sake of my son, the King of Love!"

Rosella did as she was told, but the ogress was so angry she was going to eat her. But her daughters said they would abandon her if she did.

"Well, then, I will write a letter, and Rosella must carry it to my friend."

(Now this friend was an ogress worse than herself.)

Poor Rosella was disheartened when she saw the letter, and, descending the ladder of hair, found herself in the midst of a lonely plain. She uttered her usual complaint, when, all at once, the King of Love appeared, and said:

"You see, your curiosity has brought you to this point!"

Poor thing, when she saw him she began to cry, and begged his pardon for what she had done. He took pity on her, and said:

"Now listen to what you must do. On your way you will come to a river of blood; you must stoop down and take up some in your hands, and say: 'How beautiful is this crystal water! such water as this I have never drunk.' Then you will come to another stream of turbid water and do the same there. Then you will find yourself in a garden where there is a great quantity of fruit, pick some and eat it, saying: 'What fine pears! I have never eaten such pears as these.' Afterward, you will come to an oven that bakes bread day and night, and no one buys any, although it is very cheap. When you come there, say: 'Oh, what fine loaves! bread like this I have never eaten,' and eat some. Then you will come to an entrance guarded by two hungry dogs; give them a piece of bread to eat. Then you will come to a door-way all dirty and full of cobwebs; take a broom and sweep it clean. Go in, and half-way up the stairs you will find two



ROSSELLA SWEEPS AWAY THE COBWEBS.

giants, each with a dusty piece of meat by his side; take a brush and clean it for them. When you have entered the house, you will find a razor, a pair of scissors and a knife; take something and polish them. When you have done this, go in and deliver your letter to my mother's friend, the ogress. While she is reading it, snatch up a little box on the table and run for your life. Take care to do all the things I have told you, or else you will never escape alive."

Rosella did as she was told, and while the ogress was reading the letter, Rosella seized the box and ran for her life. When the ogress had finished reading her letter, she called:

"Rosella! Rosella!"

When she received no answer, she perceived that she had been betrayed, and cried out:

"Razor, Scissors, Knife, cut her in pieces!"

They answered:

"As long as we have been razor, scissors and knife, when did you ever deign to polish us? Rosella came and brightened us up."

The ogress, enraged, exclaimed:

"Stairs, swallow her up!"

"As long as I have been stairs, when did you ever deign to sweep me? Rosella came and swept me."

The ogress cried in a passion:

"Giants, crush her!"

"As long as we have been giants, when did you ever deign to clean our food for us? Rosella came and did it."

Then the furious ogress called on the entrance to bury her alive, the dogs to devour her, the furnace to burn her, the tree to fall on her, and the rivers to drown her; but they all remembered Rosella's kindness and refused to injure her.

Meanwhile, Rosella continued her way, and at last became curious to know what was in the box she was carrying. So she opened it and a great quantity of little puppets came out; some danced, some sang, and some played on musical instruments. She stopped and amused herself a long time; but when she was ready to go on her way the little figures would not go back into the box. Night approached, and she exclaimed, as she had so often before:

"Ah, King of Love," etc.

Then her husband appeared and said: "Oh! your curiosity will be the death of you!" and commanded the puppets to enter the box again. Then Rosella went her way and arrived safely at her mother-in-law's. When the ogress saw her, she exclaimed:

"You owe this luck to my son, the King of Love!" and was going to devour poor Rosella, but her daughters said:

* It was the custom in Rome and Greece to conduct the bride to her husband's house at evening by torch-light, and the above mention of torches is undoubtedly the popular recollection of what was once a national custom.

VOL. VI.—8.

"Poor child, she has brought you the box; why do you want to eat her?"

"Well and good; you want to marry my son, the King of Love; then take these six mattresses, and go and fill them with birds' feathers!"

Rosella descended and began to wander about, uttering her usual lament. When her husband



CINDERELLA AND THE LITTLE OLD WOMAN (PAGE 106).

appeared, Rosella told him what had happened. He whistled, and the King of the Birds appeared and commanded all the birds to come and drop their feathers, fill the six beds, and carry them back to the ogress, who again said that her son had helped Rosella. However, she went and made up her son's bed with the six mattresses, and that very day she made him marry the daughter of the King of Portugal.

Then she called Rosella, and, telling her that her son was married, bade her bear two lighted torches* for the newly wedded pair. Rosella obeyed, but soon the King of Love, under the plea that Rosella

was tired of bearing the torches, persuaded his bride to take her place and let the poor girl rest.

Just as the queen took the torches in her hands, the ground opened and swallowed her up, and the king remained happy with his Rosella, while the hateful old ogress died of apoplexy, brought on by her rage.

The next story I shall tell you is the world-famous one of "Cinderella," which I give as it is told to the children in the country around Pisa.

Once upon a time there were a man and a woman who had two daughters; one of them handsomer than the other. One of these girls was always sitting in the chimney-corner, and so they called her Cinderella. Her mother did not love her at all, and every morning sent her to take out into the fields certain ducks she owned, and gave her a pound of hemp to spin. One morning, while she was watching the ducks, she came to a ditch and sent them into the water, saying:

"Ducks, ducks, drink, drink!
If it is turbid do not drink,
If it is clear drink all you can!"

Scarcely had she uttered these words when she saw before her a little old woman.

"What are you doing here?" said the old woman.

"I am tending the ducks and must spin this pound of hemp."

"Why do they make *you* do these things?"

"Mamma wishes it."

"Does she never send your sister to watch the ducks?"

"Never!"

"Then, my dear girl, I will make you some presents: Take this comb, my child, and comb your hair."

When Cinderella did so, grain in abundance fell out of her hair on one side, and the ducks ate it until they were satisfied. When she combed the other side, jewels fell out. Next the old woman gave her a box, and told her to put them into it, and hide it carefully in her trunk. Then she struck her wand and commanded the hemp to be spun, which was instantly done.

"Now, go home," said the old woman, "and come here every day and you will find me."

Cinderella went home and said nothing, and sat in the chimney-corner; every morning she went and met the old woman, who combed her hair and spun her hemp. One morning, after the hemp was spun, the old woman said:

"Listen: to-night the Prince gives a ball, and has invited your father, mother and sister; they

will ask you in jest whether you want to go too; say you do not wish to. Do you see this little bird? Hide it in your room, and this evening, when they have gone away, go to the bird and say:

'Little green bird,
Make me more beautiful than I am.'

In a moment, you will be dressed for the ball; take this wand, strike it, and a carriage will appear. Go to the ball, no one will recognize you, and the Prince will dance with you; but take care, when they go out into the supper-room, that you call your carriage and depart, so that they cannot see where you go. Then, go to the bird again, and say:

'Little green bird,
Make me homelier than I am.'

And you will be as you were before; go back to your chimney-corner, and say nothing."

Cinderella took the bird home, and concealed it in her trunk; and when evening came, and she was left alone, she went and did all the old woman had told her to do. When she arrived at the ball the Prince danced with her and fell in love with her; but as soon as the supper-hour came, she entered her carriage and went home.

When the Prince missed her, he bade his attendants look for her everywhere; but they did not find her.

Hoping that she would return if he gave another ball, the Prince informed all his guests before they went that they were invited to another ball the next night. The father, mother and sister, went home, and found Cinderella sitting by the fire.

"It was a splendid ball," said her mother; "and there was a lady there who was a beauty, and nobody knows who she was. If you had only seen how handsome she was!"

"It makes no difference to me," said Cinderella very meekly.

"You see," said her mother, "there is going to be another ball to-morrow; you can go if you want to."

"No, no; I will stay by the fire and be comfortable."

In the morning, she went out as usual with the ducks, and found the old woman, who told her to go to the ball again in the evening, and, if she was followed, to throw some money out of the carriage-window.

Everything happened as on the previous evening; the Prince was delighted to see her, and gave his servants orders to keep their eyes on her. So, when she entered her carriage, they began to run after her; but she threw so much money out that they stopped to pick it up, and so lost sight of her, and

the Prince, in despair, was obliged to give a third ball the next night.

On her return, her mother said to Cinderella that there was to be another ball; but she did not care to hear about it, and acted as if it were nothing to her. In the morning, she took out the ducks and found the old woman.

"So far, everything has gone well; but listen: this evening, you will have a dress with little gold bells, and gold slippers. The Prince's servants will follow you,—throw them one slipper and some money; but this time they will find out where you go."

When night came, and she was alone in the house, the little bird caused her to be dressed in a magnificent dress all covered with little golden bells, and, for her feet, little gold slippers which were a wonder. The Prince danced with her, and was more and more in love with her. When she entered her carriage as usual, the servants followed her, but paid no attention to the money; one of them, however, picked up the slipper. When they saw where the carriage stopped, they went back and told the Prince, who rewarded them richly.

The next morning, Cinderella went out with the ducks and found the old woman, who said to her:

"You must hurry this morning, for the Prince is coming for you."

Then she gave her the comb, spun her hemp, and made her go home. As soon as her mother saw her, she said:

"Why have you come back so soon this morning?"

"Go and see how fat the ducks are," she answered; and her mother saw that they were

really fat, and was silent. At noon, the Prince came with his carriages and knocked at the door. They saw that it was the Prince, and all ran down to meet him, except Cinderella, for she went to the bird, who clothed her again in the dress with the gold bells, but gave her only one golden slipper.

Meanwhile, the Prince asked her father:

"How many daughters have you?"

"One only; here she is!"

"What, have you no others?"

"Yes, Your Highness; but I am ashamed * * * she is always sitting in the chimney-corner, and is all covered with ashes."

"Never mind; go and call her," said the Prince.

So her father called: "Cinderella, just come down here a moment!"

As she came down the stairs, at every step the little bells went *ting, ling, ling!*

"There, you see the dunce," said her mother; "she has dragged the shovel and tongs after her!"

But they were all thunder-struck when she appeared dressed like a beauty.

"She is the one I have been looking for," said the Prince; "she lacks only one golden slipper; let us see if this is the missing one!"

Then he pulled from his pocket the golden slipper, and gave it to Cinderella, who blushed and put it on, and saw that it was her own. The Prince at once asked for her hand, and her father and mother could not say "No." Cinderella took with her the little bird, and all the riches she had received from the old woman, and went away with the Prince. They had a splendid wedding, and treated her father, mother and sister, as well as if they had always been kind to her.



THE PRINCE'S ATTENDANTS PURSUE CINDERELLA.



SNAKES AND BIRDS.

BY ERNEST INGERSOLL.

THE nests of the humming-birds are as beautiful as such a bird's home ought to be. They are formed of the down attached to the seeds of various wild plants like the milk-weed, the furze from the stems of ferns, the silk of spiders' webs and gossamer, soft lichens and cottony mold, and are exceedingly delicate and pretty. Each nest contains only two eggs.

The eggs of all the several hundreds of kinds of humming-birds which inhabit North and South America—and nowhere else, by the way—are pure white, and some of them not as large as the drop of ink clinging to the end of my over-filled pen.

In the case of many of the humming-birds, the nest is tucked into a little bag formed by folding over the edges near the point of a long drooping leaf. This makes them inaccessible to their enemies, and very secure. Other species place their homes in a crotch of a bush between upright twigs; while the ruby-throat—the

"Bright little, light little, slight little hummer,
Lover of sunshine and lover of summer,"

which visits the "odorous bowers" of our northern greenhouses and gardens—constructs a cup of vegetable shreds, matted and glued together, with a downy bed within, and saddles it upon the upper side of a limb of some orchard or forest tree. Only about twice as large as a thimble, and covered with wood lichens and bits of green moss, it looks so very much like an old knot, or scar, or excrescence on the bark, that few persons would think of its being a nest, if they saw it at all, unless they happened to discover the owner enter or leave it.

The artist has shown us an unusually large nest;

but as his entire picture, with its long-nosed snake, could not, of course, have been based on an instantaneous photograph, we must make due allowance.

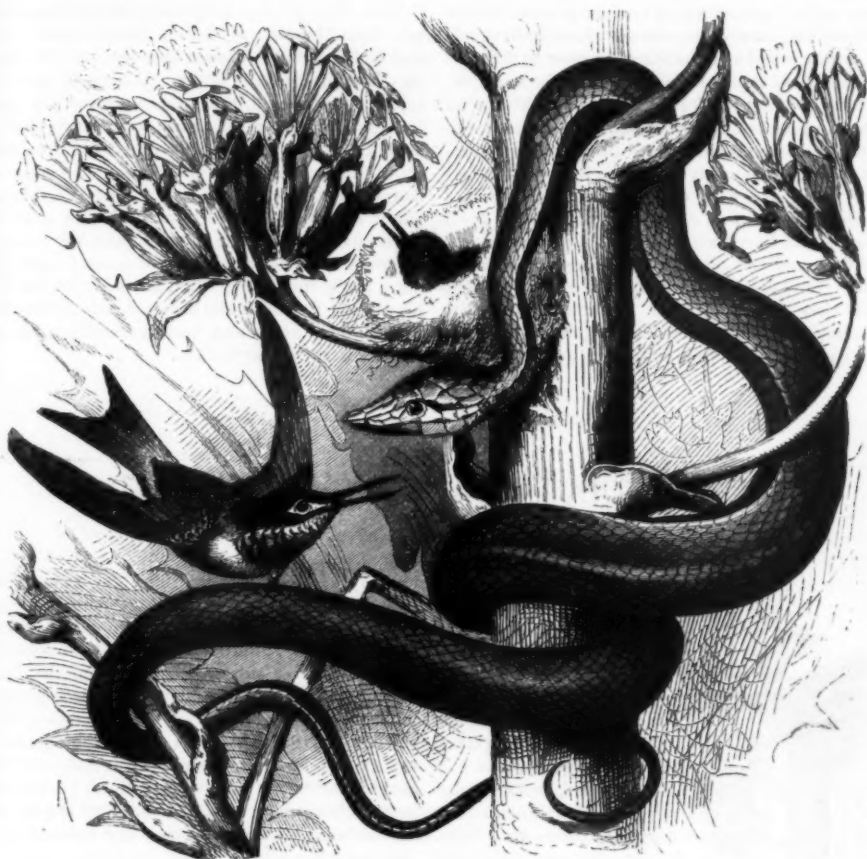
But in spite of the great care with which the tiny dwelling is hidden, snakes' sharp eyes sometimes find it, as they detect the nests of almost all other birds, and they stealthily crawl out on the bending branches, grasping stronger ones with their tails lest the slenderer supports should break, and devour the callow young or suck the eggs.

The daring courage of humming-birds is well known. They will fight anything whatever that interferes with them, and dart with such lightning rapidity at the object of their hatred, pecking at the eyes with their needle-like beaks, that they drive away the enemy by small, but persistent torments, as effectually as if they did it by force.

Frequent contests between birds and serpents in which the reptile sometimes comes off victor, and afterward eats the bird, have given rise to a widespread notion that the snake's eye has, over most small birds, a singular and irresistible influence, causing them, in spite of every effort, to draw nearer and nearer, and at last fall senseless into the reptile's open jaws. It has even been said that our common black-snake "draws" cat-birds down from the tops of tall trees to certain death, by a charm which they had no power to break; and other incidents, equally hard to believe, are told of the *fascination* of a serpent's basilisk eye. The older these tales are, the more they savor of the marvelous; for they began to be believed long before any books were written. At last, the ancient poets—who were public story-tellers, somewhat like the minstrels and bards of whom Sir Walter Scott writes

in his novels, and were accustomed to invent long "yarns" for the amusement of the people, and also in payment for their own board and lodging—imagined an animal called the basilisk, or the cockatrice, as it is translated in the Bible. They described it as born from an egg, laid by a very old cock, and hatched by a reptile. In general shape, this fabulous animal was like a chameleon; but it had a head

to lure any animal to destruction by the fascination of its glittering eye. This idea survives even to this day. People who believed that the really rather dull eye of the black-snake, or rattle-snake, or tiny grass-snake, can charm an active bird into dropping into its jaws, could have believed easily in the griffins and harpies, sirens and incombustible phoenixes * of the old Greeks.



THE SNAKE AND THE HUMMING-BIRD.

and eight feet like a cock, and short wings on its shoulders. Its very presence was fatal to all other animals, including man; its breath poisoned the air, and its glance was death. Afterward, as people began to doubt some things that these old poets told them, they took away one by one the deadly powers of the basilisk, and at last left it only power

At the same time, there is a grain of truth in each of these marvelous tales of imaginary animals and their deadly qualities. The bird knows perfectly well the danger which lies in getting too near that gently waving head, with its gleaming scales and flaming tongue; it knows the power of that snake to spring at it and strike it a fatal blow; and the

* A description of many of these mythological creatures, with illustrations, can be found in ST. NICHOLAS for October, 1875.

mere presence of the terrible danger might be so attractive to the bird that it would venture too near, and so fall a prey to its recklessness. Love of danger for its own sake is certainly a characteristic of many men, and some do not seem able to resist encountering the greatest risk and doing themselves positive harm, for no reason except that they have a good opportunity. Many persons commit suicide, doubtless, under the same strange longing to throw one's self off precipices, or into deep water, which we have felt, most of us, when we have been standing on the top of a big building, or close to the swift and turbulent rapids at Niagara Falls, for example.

It may be that the fearful peril—and there is no danger a bird can better appreciate—stupefies and turns the heads of the birds until, often, they commit suicide. But this is not caused by any "fascination" from the eyes of the snake, for when a heronry catches fire, or a house is burning upon which storks have built their nests, the poor owners will fly round and round in the smoke and flame as though they found it impossible to leave the spot, until they fall dead; and, sometimes, when the Carolina marshes are flooded by gales driving the water in-shore, the rails will seem to become per-

fectly crazy and senseless of all other harm, in their anxiety for the safety of their homes.

Then, too, it may sometimes happen that, in the course of the struggle, the bird will become wounded, and faint from lack of blood, or, under the influence of the reptile's venom, will slowly cease its resistance, and at last fall down as though charmed. But, in general, the snakes have a hard time of it in a fight with their feathered foes.

More than once a single pair of mocking-birds has been known to kill a large black-snake that had insinuated himself into the bush in which they had placed their home. Whenever the ugly reptile is discovered, the male mocker darts upon it with the speed of an arrow, dexterously eluding its bite, and striking it violently and incessantly about the head. The snake soon perceives his danger, and seeks to escape; but the intrepid father redoubles his exertions, and even after the snake has reached the ground, and his strength begins to flag, the mocking-bird seizes it, and, lifting it partly from the ground, beats it to death with his wings. Cat-birds and brown thrashers often will protect their nests, and deal vengeance upon the robber, in the same fashion.

THE EAVES, THE FLOWERS, AND THE SWALLOWS.

BY EMMA BURT.



USTY and weather-beaten was the old eaves-trough, —so very old, a part of it had actually fallen out, leaving a hole; and the rest was seamed with many a crack and crevice. Mosses began to gather in the grooves; and one day a wee, slender thing came up through the mosses into the light. Straight, and pale, and tender, this tiny plant grew up alone: in sun, and wind, and rain, it stoutly held its own. In

silence, yet pausing not, it grew. Swiftly and surely it put forth leaf by leaf; until, one day, it was crowned with a golden crest of flowers. And then it proved to be the wee-est golden-rod ever seen.

No one knew how it came, or whence. All the neighbors were thinking of themselves. The grape

near by was busy with its fruit. The trumpet-vine swung from the trees, its royal red trumpets ready for the king. The birds were teaching their fledglings how to fly, and the white clouds above in the blue were never still an hour. As for the plants that grow upon the ground, they never could have lifted their eyes so high.

So, when these lofty folks saw the flowers in the trough, they began to wonder "Is it right?" "Is it best?" and "what shall we do with it?"—they said among themselves. They all knew well the meadow was its home; for afar off they saw the waving of the proud heads of its kin.

In time it ceased to be a wonder and was forgotten.

Next year, out of the mosses in the crevice of the trough grew a row of tiny plants, pale, and slender, and resolute. And they grew up swiftly, and flowered into five little golden-crested rods.

This time, the neighbors were disturbed indeed. They talked it over and over together, and wondered what next would come to pass.

At length, they got a pair of philosophers to come and see. They were two fork-tailed swallows.

They came, they perched upon the ridge of the roof, and looked and chattered. They said:

"Little flowers, are you mad, to come up in the trough, and live without friends, or earth to grow in? Why do you do so?"

"Because we were sown," said the flowers.

"But it is wrong," said the two birds in concert. "Whereunto may not this evil grow? You are misplaced, and are, moreover, the most ridiculous little pigmies ever seen."

"All we know is, we were sown," said the flowers.

"Why don't you refuse to grow?" said the birds.

"Because we are bound to do the best we can," said the flowers.

"At least, you could wither before the sun!" said one bird.

"Or break before the wind!" said the other.

"Or refuse to bloom!" cried both.

"Oh," said the flowers, with modesty, "we may be little and lone; but let us hold our own stout hearts, at least."

"But are you happy?" said the birds.

"Most happy," said the flowers,—and just then a ray of sun-light fell on them,—“since we've done the best we could.”

"And are you willing to live on just for that?"

"Yes! oh yes!" cried all the five little golden-rods in a breath.

Then the stupid swallows flew away quite disgusted, and told all the wise plants that those five little flowers were too ignorant to be taught.



PAUL JONES OF OVERLOOK MOUNTAIN.

(A True Story.)

BY LAURA WINTHROP JOHNSON.

MY children, would you like to hear an old man's story? Then gather 'round my great arm-chair, and listen.

"Do I remember the Revolutionary war?"

Not quite, I must say; but I can look back to the time when this century was a very young one, and younger than any of you. I will tell you a story of something that happened to me when this same century had just come of age,—that is, in the year 1821.

I was then about eighteen years old, and my father had hired me out to a lumber merchant at Glenn's Falls, who had sent me down the river into the Catskills as one of a gang for cutting timber and getting out hemlock-bark. It was hard work, but we had jolly rough times, and I liked the life, and the dry, cold air of the mountains. There was always something going on in our lumber-camp. It was fine to hew down the great trees, and to hear them fall with a crash that seemed to shake the hills, and we liked rolling the great logs, all singing in chorus, and the building of roaring camp-fires at night, with plenty of songs and stories and jokes as we sat around them. We were simple young fellows, and very small jokes lasted a long

time, and could be used over and over again, while the dark woods rang with our uproarious laughter.

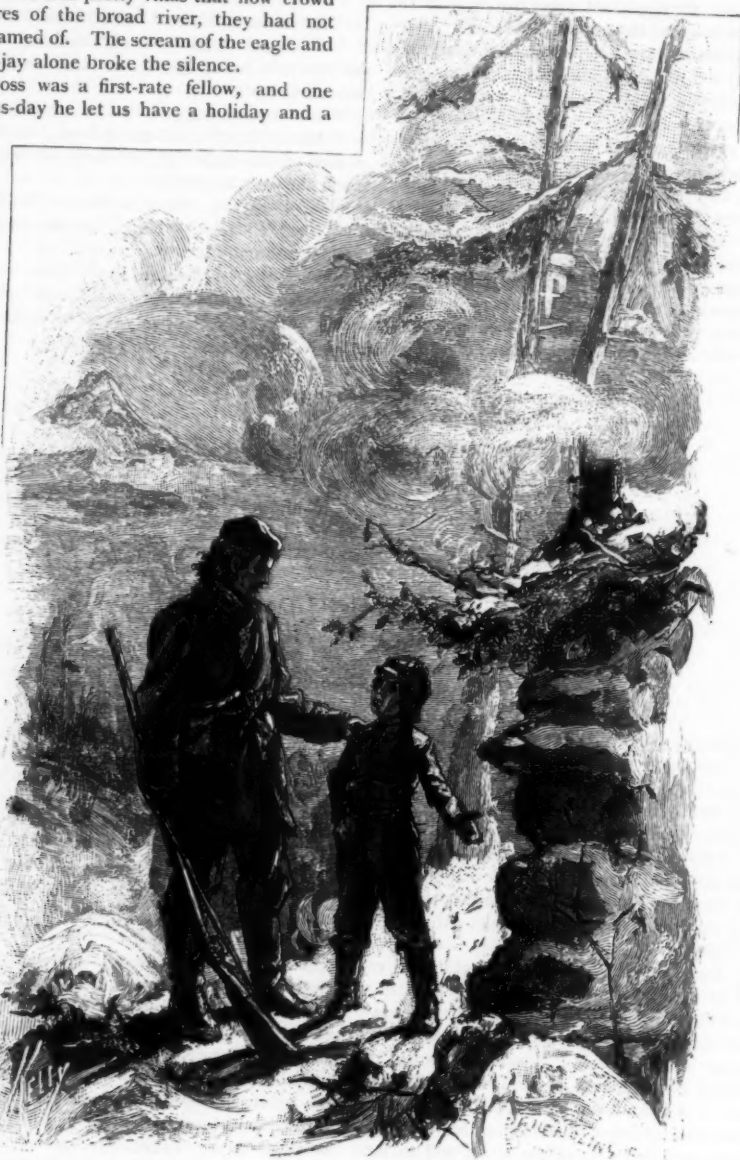
The river then was very unlike what it is now. There is still plenty of wilderness among the Catskills, more than there was twenty or thirty years ago. For then there were tanneries in every valley, but now they all have disappeared, and the big hemlock-trunks, stripped of their bark, lie rotting in labyrinths on the long slopes, covered with a dense new growth.

At that time, however, half the course of the Hudson was a wilderness. Here and there at long intervals were small towns and villages, and farms and manors were seen, where the banks were less high and shaggy. No railroad trains rushed along the shores; no steam-whistles broke the silence; no great three-story steam-boats thundered by, thronged with people. The river was a quiet place in those days. Light, graceful sloops, and slow-moving barges and arks were all the craft we saw on its waters, excepting the little steam-boats, not much larger than one of our small tugs, that came up sometimes, and were still looked upon with a touch of wonder.

As for the great ice-houses, the factories, the fine

country-seats and pretty villas that now crowd the shores of the broad river, they had not been dreamed of. The scream of the eagle and the blue-jay alone broke the silence.

Our boss was a first-rate fellow, and one Christmas-day he let us have a holiday and a



"AFRAID? NO! FATHER TOLD ME TO STAY HERE, AND I'M GOING TO DO IT."

big sleigh-ride. All the girls of the country round were invited, the snow lay just deep enough, and the sleighing was capital.

But I was sulky and would not go, because I'd

been 'cut out,' as we called it, with the girl I wanted to take. I was very fond of still-hunting, and in my vexation I went off to look for deer. Beyond the Kauterskill Clove, I did n't know the

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country very well, but an old man told me they often crossed the pass above Plauterkill and I went to look for them there.

I hunted all day, and found no deer; they had grown shy and scarce, and had gone away, over the mountains toward Hunter. I had a long chase over their tracks, up the Clove to Hayne's Falls, and away over to the top of Plauterkill Clove, and then along the pass by the shoulder of Indian Head, to the side of Overlook Mountain. It was coming on toward night, with a wild sunset blazing, and gusts of wind springing up, and I began to think of getting back, or, at least, of finding some place to sleep; for, in my eagerness for deer, I had gone too far to return to Catskill village that night. I thought I might get as far as Plauterkill or Hayne's Falls, where there were a few houses.

I was turning to go up the pass again, when, just on the edge of the hemlock forest, under a ledge of rocks on the mountain-side, I saw a small quarry, where a few paving stones had been taken out, and close by a smoke curling into the air. I looked sharp, and, sure enough, there was a little hut tucked under the ledge; just a shed, so rough that it seemed like part of the rock, with a stone wall, and a few slabs and boughs to roof it over.

The sun was setting angrily down the valley, behind the distant Shandaken range, and pouring on the near mountains great dashes of orange light; and the purple chasms between, and the black pines and hemlocks that stood out against the heights where the snow was sky-blue and gold,—all had a strange and stormy look. I was just thinking how handsome those mountains were, and yet what dangerous faces they had, as if they meant to have a wild night of it among themselves. Overlook had his white cap on, and the others were gathering mist around their tops. The day had been still, but now a strong wind blew from the hills, and drove the loose snow in fine powder before it. I was just noticing all this, you know, and saying to myself that there was not a moment to spare, and I must hurry, or the storm would be upon me, when I heard a little voice near me, calling out:

"Mister! have you seen my father, anywheres?"

I started with surprise to see in that lonely wintry place the figure and face of a pretty little boy, about ten years old, suddenly standing out against the sunset sky.

"Your father? No, my boy," said I. "But what are you doing here, miles away from any house, all alone at this time of day?"

"Why, you see, sir," said the boy, as cheerful as a chipmunk, "my father *told* me to stay till he came back. He went down this morning to Woodstock to get news of mother who is very sick. If

she's no better, he'll come up to-night and take me home to-morrow, but, if she is better, he'll want me to stay here with him, and help get out some more stone."

"But, my boy," said I, "there's a heavy snow-storm coming. Look down there toward Shandaken. Look at the queer colors in that sky. If you stay here to-night you will be covered in with drifts till next summer, and never come out alive. Have you got food?"

"Enough for to-night," said the brave little fellow.

"And are you not afraid of——" I stopped short. I was going to say bears, for I had seen plenty of their tracks that day.

"Afraid? No! Father's *sure* to come. He told me to stay, and I'm going to do it."

I went into the little cabin and found a tiny stove, a few armfuls of chips, a pitcher of water, a bit of bread and cheese, and a pair of tattered blankets; that was all. My heart sank. Fuel, to be sure, was plenty, but how was that heroic little fellow to bring enough to keep himself from freezing if his father did not come.

It seemed almost certain death for him to remain there in the lonely pass through such a storm as was close at hand. It was growing dusk in the high valley; light flurries, forerunners of the tempest, were beginning to sweep down from the heights and long lines of white clouds were filing through the gorges.

"Come with me, my boy," I cried. "Come at once! We may get across to the head of Plauterkill before the storm bursts, and we shall be more sheltered in the woods. See how dark it grows all of a sudden."

"I *must* mind my father," said he. "He *told* me to stay, and I'm *going* to stay. He'll be *sure* to come."

"Who knows," thought I, "but your father may be drinking all this time in the old tavern at Woodstock? Yet so sharp a boy would have learned already not to trust such a father as that."

"Look here, my little man," I said; "you've *got* to come with me. If you wont, I shall carry you. I must not leave you here. Come along! You've got to go!"

As I started forward to take hold of him the boy gave a shout of laughter, and springing through the door-way vanished among the woods in a twinkling. I drew a long breath of wonder, and ran as fast as I could in the direction in which he had disappeared, but though I searched the mountain-side for nearly half an hour, so cunningly had he hidden himself away in the bewilderment of rocks and fallen trees, that my search was vain. He knew too well, all the caves and fastnesses of Overlook,

and was laughing at me, safely hidden away in one of them, like a little Puck, or mocking mountain sprite. The powdering drifts that were flying about had already hidden his small footsteps. The twilight was nearly gone, large flakes of snow began to fall thickly, and an ominous roar could be heard in the tops of the pines. The storm was upon me. I thought it best to take care of number one, as I had lost the half one, but I was sorely troubled and could not bear to leave that boy behind. Yet, though my conscience smote me, I hurried on as fast as possible through the pathless woods, often straying out of my course in the whirling tempest, till I reached, I hardly know how, the charcoal-burners at the top of the pass. There I got warm and rested a little, and then got on a little farther to Plauterkill Falls, where I spent what was left of the night.

Next morning I started early to get back to my work, though it was a very hard tug, and the storm was not much abated. But I did not want the boss to think that I had been carousing over-night. I valued my character a great deal, and meant to keep it up. I tried to persuade the people at Plauterkill to go over for the boy, but they would not go out-of-doors that day, they said, for Jones's boy, or any other boy. He might take care of himself.

Our lumbering was stopped for a while by that storm, and our gang were sent over to Rondout to ship timber, and from there back to Glenn's Falls, and I never knew what became of that boy. I always blamed myself for not staying with him for the night, or at least till his father came, and for my cowardice in caring more about losing my place, or possibly my life (for I came mighty near being lost in that storm), than for the safety of that fine, manly little fellow, whose bright face haunted me for many a day. Well, time went on. I was married to the very girl for whose sake alone I took to the woods that day; I tried to gain some education and read all the books I could get; I rose to be a partner and then to be a boss lumber-man myself. I grew rich, and middle-aged, and old, and still I heard nothing of the boy, though I made many inquiries after him. I never had any children of my own, to live, and I kept wishing I could adopt that boy; for, strange to say, it never occurred to me that if he were alive, he would be a middle-aged man, only eight or ten years younger than I. He always appeared to my fancy as the fine, handsome child of ten whom I had seen darting through the cabin-door into the forest, dim with winter twilight. I used often to go up and down the river then on business, but I never much fancied to pass by the Catskills. I don't know how it was, but it seemed as if that little fellow had somehow

got a hold on my heart, and would n't let go. One day I was on the Albany boat,—it was in the fall of 1860,—and when about noon, or later, we came in sight of the fine old mountains, looking just the color of blue-bells and periwinkle flowers, I turned my back to them. There was a handsome man, with hair just turning iron-gray, standing near, who looked at me rather hard, as I wheeled short round, as if he wondered what I was about, for I suppose I looked as if I had something on my mind.

So I said to him: "I don't much like to look at those splendid old fellows, because I have been always afraid that I may have been partly the cause of the death of a little chap, away up there by Overlook, many years ago."

"Why, how was that?" said the gentleman, as polite as possible. Then I told him all the story, just as I have told it to you, and he listened, with a queer twinkle in his eye; but the water stood in them, too.

"Then," said he, "my friend, don't trouble yourself any more about that boy. You were not at all to blame. He is still alive, to my certain knowledge; for here he stands before you, and his name's Paul Jones."

I could scarcely believe my senses, and it was a minute or two before I could take it all in.

"You that boy!" said I, and starting back, I nearly went over the guards in my wonder. "Why, you must be Rip Van Winkle himself! But, do tell me all about it."

"Well," said he, "I was tickled enough when I found I had outwitted you, and saw you go away beaten. I knew my father would come, for he never broke his word to me, and in about an hour he did come; but he'd had a very hard time getting there. My mother was better, and it would n't do to try, he said, to get home that night. I tell you we had a rough time in that hut, all snowed in and nearly frozen; but we managed to hold out till the next afternoon, when the storm abated a little, and hunger started us back to Woodstock. We managed to struggle through. My father carried me most of the way on his back; there were a few farm-houses at the foot of Overlook to rest in, and, though we were almost frozen again, we reached Woodstock before night-fall. I was as much troubled about you as you were about me; for I did not think you knew the woods as well as my father. I was right about my father, you see? I was sure he would come, and come he did; but we did n't get out any more stone for a good while.

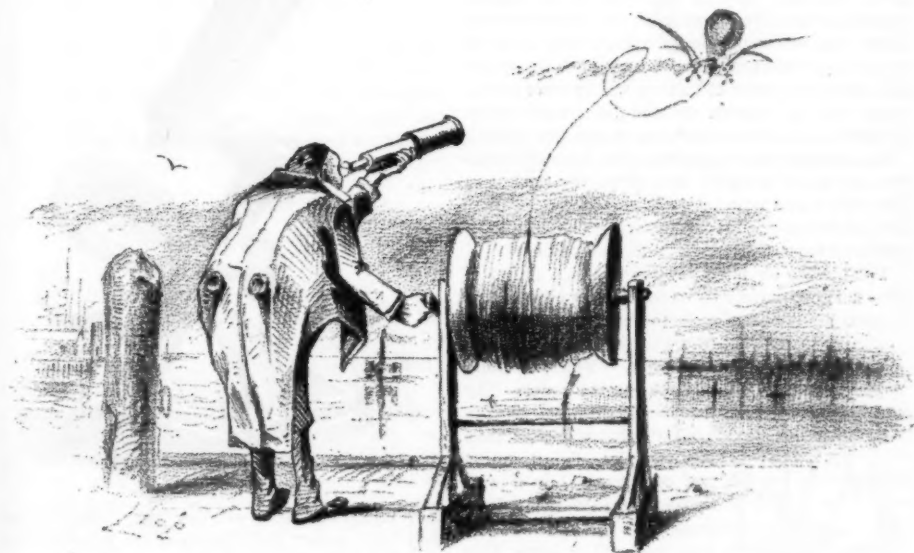
"He did not care for danger, my father did n't; if he'd given me his word he kept it, and I kept mine. So here I am, Rip Van Winkle if you like, and you may make friends again with our jolly

mountains, who are good friends of mine, too. Why, have n't we both made our money out of 'em, —you in lumber, I in stone? I was brought up among them, and I'm fond of them. I know every nook and cranny of 'em, and I could have told you that day where to find the deer you were after. I even knew of a famous bear-hole, where, if you 'd wanted, you could have found a big she-one with cubs. My father got them some time afterward with me and the dog. And now, if you 'll just land here, at Rondout, you 'll find my team waiting, and I 'll drive you over to my house, beyond Kingston toward the quarries, where you 'll find my wife, as pretty a woman as any on the river, and as fine a family of boys and girls as you 'd wish to see. We shall be just in time for a good old-fashioned early tea, and a good appetite."

The end of it was that he persuaded me to accept his invitation, and I went to visit my old and new friend, Paul Jones. And there, among the children of the household, I found a little Paul,—a manly boy of ten,—who seemed the very same whom I had left alone in the mountain-pass forty years before.

He has always spent a great deal of time with me ever since, and I have considered him as my child.

I should be very lonely now if it were not for my friend, Paul Jones, and his charming family. They form quite a large colony, and I am always quite at home among them; for the best friend of my old age is the boy whom I found and lost on the side of Overlook Mountain on that wild winter's night of 1821.



A WISE man built him a flying machine;
 "T will cross the ocean," quoth he, "I ween.
 'T will cross the ocean safely, I trow,
 But 't will have to cross without me, I vow!"

THE MICROSCOPE; AND WHAT I SAW THROUGH IT.

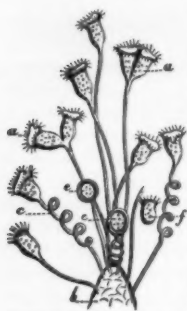
BY MRS. MARY TREAT.

THE picture on this page represents a compound binocular microscope-stand. It is called binocular because it has two tubes, so that we can use both eyes; and it is called compound because it has two sets of glasses. At the top of the microscope, marked *a, a*, are the eye-pieces through which we look. The lower end of the tube, *b*, is where we screw on the object-glass,—the real magnifying power,—and these object-glasses are called low or high according to the number of times they magnify. An object-glass magnifying 15 diameters would be low, but one of 1,500 diameters would be very high.

A good microscope is such a complicated piece of machinery, and costs so much, that boys and girls, generally, must be contented to use smaller and less satisfactory instruments, or to hear and read about what older people see; but I hope some of my young readers may become so much interested that when they grow older they will procure microscopes and go on with the delightful work which we older people must in course of time lay aside.

The microscope reveals fairy-like, beautiful creatures, far more beautiful than those you read of in fairy-tales; and our fairies in this real world pass through as many forms or transformations as the most approved fairy of the imagination could desire.

The picture on page 117 represents a group of these fairy creatures, as seen through an object-glass magnifying about 160 diameters. It is called a



DEVELOPMENT OF VORTICELLA.

a, a, in division; *b*, base; *c*, coiled stem; *d, e, e*, encysted vorticella; *f*, floating bell, just freed from stem.

“tree vorticella” and lives in the water. You will think it looks much more like a tree with flowers on the ends of the branches than it does like living, moving creatures; but if you could look into the microscope and see how wonderfully polite they seem, how they bow and courtesy to each other as if preparing for a grand quadrille, you would not hesitate in calling them marvelous, beautiful, fairy creatures. Yes, a tree endowed with life and motion, and the little bell-shaped animals are decked out in

gay colors,—red and green and yellow,—making them as brilliant as a many-hued flower. The margin of the bell is beautifully fringed with hairs or cilia, and this fringe is almost always in rapid motion, making a little current in the water, by which means they capture their food. But the little creatures will not accept everything for food which the current brings them; a great many small particles



A COMPOUND MICROSCOPE.

they reject, and send whirling away, which shows they have power and discrimination to select their food just as larger animals have.

Now and then, one breaks away from the home stem [see *f* in picture showing development of vorticella], and instantly goes whirling away as if delighted to be free, no longer tied to its parent.

In a book entitled “Great Wonders in Little Things,” by Rev. Sidney Dyer, I found the following pleasing passage on the movements of the free vorticellae:

“It is very interesting to watch the eccentric movements of the free vorticellae. They seem to exult in their deliverance from restraint; hence they part from the stem, where they have had their growth,

with a violent jerk, and spring away with a flying speed. Here they go, over and over, like a gymnast turning somersaults,—now stopping to revolve in an eccentric orbit, or spinning like a top; now zigzag, or with an up-and-down motion. Occasionally one will stop, and, turning the mouth or bell downward, will remain motionless, except a rapid play of the cilia, which is so violent as sometimes to give an oscillating motion to the animal. This motion continues for a few moments, when the creature either resumes or, which is more generally the case, suddenly flies into broken fragments, like the bursting of a grind-stone, from too rapid revolution."

We can, when looking at wonders like these, say with Solomon: "The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear with hearing." We look and look again, and wonder if it is a dream or reality that we see. We are truly beholding something stranger than the "stuff that dreams are made of, yet as real as the everlasting hills,—a delicate picture of nature's painting."

I have often watched the little bell-shaped animals after they became free from the parent stem, but I never saw one break into fragments as the reverend gentleman describes, while it had the regular form of the true vorticella; but in another form called the encysted stage [see *e, e*, on page 116], when the little animal is inclosed in a transparent shell corresponding to the chrysalis stage of the butterfly, I have seen this thin shell break, freeing numerous tiny monad-like bodies, which the microscopists tell us, after passing through different forms, at last become real bell-shaped vorticellæ. This transformation is no more wonderful than that



A TREE VORTICELLA.

of the ugly-looking caterpillar passing into the chrysalis stage, from which emerges the lovely butterfly.

MISTLETOE-GATHERING IN NORMANDY.

BY MARGARET BERTHA WRIGHT.

It once happened to two American wanderers to spend Christmas in an old French chateau. Many Christmases had passed since these Americans had seen their own native land. Some of them had been spent in "Merrie England," where the heavy plum-puddings had given them nightmares enough to equip a cavalry regiment, and where the sight of hundreds of thousands of beeves' hearts and slaughtered swine had filled them with thoughts which were not merry, and had made them long for that blessed land, beyond the sea, in which plump turkeys, delicious cranberry sauce and golden squash pies were at that very time making thousands of tables a lively sight for hungry eyes to see. Six-years-old Charley, coming to his first Christmas dinner in England, piteously said: "Why, mamma, 't is n't a really true's-you-live Christmas at all, 'cause there's no squash pie."

How the good-natured English friends laughed at the word "squash!" "Do you have higgledy-piggledy and clusly-mushy, as well as squash, in America?" asked one lady, whose only idea of squash was that it was a decayed peach, or an over-ripe cucumber fallen from a great height.

We reached the grand old chateau, so venerable and ivy-grown, six weeks before Christmas. Thus we were in time to see the curious and interesting harvest which is collected every year, about the end of November. This is the gathering of the mistletoe, which grows abundantly in the apple-orchards of Normandy, and is sent thence in great quantities to London and New York, though chiefly to the former city. For New York, the mistletoe is gathered near the end of November; for London, it is harvested a few days before Christmas. It is used for the decoration of homes during the holi-

days, and I have seen it left hanging to the chandeliers, sometimes, withered and dry, until another Christmas-tide brought fresh boughs and berries. The hanging of the mistletoe is a cause of much frolic and laughter in the house. It is the rule that whoever is passing under the mistletoe-bough must submit to being kissed then and there by whosoever chooses to take that liberty. As a bough usually hangs from the center of the ceiling, spreading over a large space, it follows that there must be much dodging or much kissing; I am inclined to think that there are both.

The origin of this use of the mistletoe is not known; but we do know that more than eighteen hundred years ago, when the glad stars sang together over the manger in Bethlehem, and wise men brought gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh to a young Child in the peasant mother's arms, England was a chill, mist-covered island, inhabited only by savages, who wore garments of skins and lived in huts of mud and stone. Among these savage Britons there were pagan priests called Druids. These priests were a mysterious folk, who lived in dense woods far away from other men, and who, in the gloomy solitudes of the forest, performed strange secret ceremonies. The "sacred groves," as they were called, were of oak; for the oak was a divine tree, according to the Druidical religion. Within these sacred groves, the priests, it is recorded in history, offered their sacrifices, and in some manner, not now known, they employed the mistletoe. But all mistletoe was not sacred to the Druids. They would have none but that which clung to the trunk and was nourished by the sap of the divine oak. To them, the apple-tree mistletoe, which modern England uses so freely in her holiday festivities, would be a worthless and common thing.

When, in later centuries, England was taught the Christian religion by priests who went thither from Rome, the people, though professing a belief in Christ, retained many of their heathen rites and customs changed from their original meaning and purpose. At any rate, from the Druids has come the modern usage of the mistletoe-bough, strangely preserved in festivities which commemorate the birth of Him whose pure worship destroys all heathen superstitions.

The mistletoe is a parasite which fastens its roots and tendrils so firmly and closely to the tree on which it grows, that it is often difficult to tell where the tree leaves off and the parasite begins. Its leaves are of a dull green color, and it bears white, wax-like berries. It has boughs and branches, and long, tough leaves, and it looks like other and more honest plants, which do not steal their support. It sucks the life from the fruit-trees, which,

after a while, droop, wither and die, forming a mere support for the plant. There is a story of an Englishman, who was so attached to the Christmas customs of his country that when he removed his home to California he carried with him some of the mistletoe and set it upon apple-trees. But the transplanted parasite did not seem to care for the apple-trees of America, when it could have richer food. So it left these and fastened itself to the wild plum-trees which grew profusely in that region. So strong did the mistletoe become in that fruitful climate, that it finally sucked out the life-sap of the wild plum-trees of the neighborhood, far and wide. And that was not all. A tribe of debased Indians, called Diggers, had always depended on the wild plums for their living. The mistletoe killed the plum-trees, and the failure of the plum harvest caused famine, distress and death among the hapless Diggers.

Before Christmas, and when the apples have been gathered and carried to the cider-presses, or stored away in "*caves*," as the French call their cellars, all the peasant children of the neighborhood, and poor people from the towns, come out to the mistletoe harvest. They are hired by the farmers for a few cents a day, and they gladly come with huge baskets, and with little donkey-carts (not much larger than wheelbarrows), called *charrettes*. These are piled so high with the harvested parasite that they look like miniature hay-carts going home to the farmer's barn.

Little Jeanne Duval came up to the chateau from *Maire Brisé's* orchard, having heard the foreign lady say that she wished to see the harvesters at work. "Will you tell the lady who talks like a baby that I have come to show her the way to the orchard?" she said to Eliza, the *femme de chambre*. The lady whose American-French seemed so baby-like to the patois-speaking child, rode along the broad highway, regarding the demure little maiden by her side more than the beautiful world about her, all silver-gray and tawny-gold, olive-green and crimson in its glorious autumnal dress. Little Jeanne wore a coarse gray woolen petticoat reaching to her ankles, and beneath this were so many other short, full-gathered petticoats that her skirts stood out as if she were "making a cheese," as the children say. She wore coarse stockings and *sabots*, or wooden shoes, that seemed as if they had been cut with a jack-knife from solid chunks of wood. Her loose black jacket reached just below her waist, and her head was covered with a white cotton cap, very like a night-cap, in which, as the lady said to herself, she looked "like a little old woman cut short."

On the way to *Maire Brisé's* orchard they passed Jeanne's mother washing clothes at a wayside fountain; and she smiled and bowed as the little party

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went by. The good woman covered each article, as she washed it, with a thick lather of soap, then, spreading it on a smooth board before her, she pounded it with a wooden shovel-shaped implement with all her might and main. Master Charley said she "gave it ballywhack," whatever that may be.

"What do you call that shovel-shaped thing?" Jeanne was asked. But Charley, who had felt very insecure in his clothes ever since he came

apple-trees at last. So, enough is left at every harvest to increase and multiply itself for the next year. It clings, clings, clings, like drowning men to wreck stuff, so that sometimes, in tearing it away, the branch to which it has fastened itself is riven from the tree. Some of the masses of foliage are so large that, at that special Christmas already mentioned, one huge bough was more than the butler at the chateau could manage to hang from the carved oak beams of the dining-room ceiling.



A VISIT TO THE MISTLETOE-GATHERERS.

into the region of wayside washer-women, answered for her, "The champion button-smasher."

Down in the orchard a large company of peasants were busy at work. The men threw off their *sabots* and climbed the gnarled apple-trees, where they could cut off the mistletoe with small, sharp saws. The women and children caught the branches as they fluttered down in great straggling masses, and loaded them into baskets and crates. The mistletoe is in so much demand in English markets that the French farmers find it profitable to encourage its growth, even though the parasite kills the

After the mistletoe is gathered, it is tightly packed into great wooden crates, like hen-coops, and sent by steamer to England. From England, a portion of it goes to America, where thousands of English families, in the home of their adoption, can eat and drink their hearty Christmas cheer beneath the familiar Druidical shadows. And it is not unlikely that, as they recall the Christmas festivities of Merrie England, and cast their eyes upward at the Normandy mistletoe, they may say, with a sigh, "Ah, this mistletoe, after all, is nothing like the mistletoe at home!"

THE SMILING DOLLY.

By M. M. D.

I WHISPERED to my Dolly,
And told her not to tell.
(She 's a really lovely Dolly,—
Her name is Rosabel.)

"Rosy," I said, "stop smiling,
For I've been dreadful bad!
You must n't look so pleasant,
As if you felt real glad!

Still Rosabel kept smiling;
And I just cried and cried—
And while I searched all over,
Her eyes were opened wide.

"Oh, Rosy, where I dropt it
I can't imagine, dear;"
And still she kept on smiling,—
I thought it very queer.



"I took mamma's new ear-ring,—
I did, now, Rosabel,—
And I never even asked her,—
Now, Rosy, don't you tell!

"You see I'll try to find it
Before I let her know;
She 'd feel so very sorry
To think I'd acted so."

I had wheeled her 'round the garden
In her gig till I was lame;
Yet when I told my trouble,
She smiled on, just the same!

Her hair waved down her shoulders
Like silk, all made of gold.
I kissed her, then I shook her,
Oh, dear! how I did scold!

"You're really naughty, Rosy,
To look so when I cry.
When *my* mamma's in trouble
I never laugh: not I."

And *still* she kept on smiling,
The queer, provoking child!
I shook her well and told her
Her conduct drove me wild.

When—only think! that ear-ring
Fell out of Rosy's hair!
When I had dressed the darling,
I must have dropped it there.

She doubled when I saw it,
And almost hit her head;—
Again, I whispered softly,
And this is what I said:

"You precious, precious Rosy!
Now, I'll go tell mamma
How bad I was—and sorry—
And O, how good you are!"

"For, Rose, I had n't lost it—
You knew it all the while,
You knew I'd shake it out, dear,
And that's what made you smile."

THE NEW CLOTHES.

(A True Story.)

BY AUNT FANNY.

ONE bright morning, last winter, "Aunt Fanny" received a mysterious letter. It was what is called an anonymous letter, for the writer's name was not signed at the end of it. An anonymous letter is very often unkind in intention, and painful to read; but, strange to tell, this one was perfectly delightful, as you shall see, for here it is:

"TO MRS. ———"

"DEAR MADAM: Having noticed in the 'New York Tribune' a few lines to the effect that you would kindly receive toys and clothing for the children of the poor, and see that they were properly bestowed, I send you by express a box of clothing which I have made, and which I desire that you will give to one little girl. I believe that they will fit a child of ten or eleven years of age. The time that I have so pleasantly employed in sewing on these little garments causes me already to feel an interest in the child who will wear them. And so, when you receive the box, if you will kindly write a line to an address I shall give below, and tell me something about the child, it will gratify me very much. My own name I wish to withhold; but a note to 'Dr. K—, F. on H.,' will reach me."

The next day the box arrived and was opened. At the top was such a pretty dark-brown plaid dress! It had little fluted white muslin ruffles at the neck and wrists; an outside pocket ornamented with a bow of beautiful cherry-colored ribbon on the right side; while inside the pocket was a nice little handkerchief. Was n't that quite complete?

Then there was a gray Balmoral skirt, with a flounce bound with bright cherry-colored braid; two white flannel petticoats made with tucks, to be let down when that happy little girl who was to get them should grow taller; pretty drawers trimmed with Hamburg edging; chemises also trimmed; several pairs of stockings, and five more pocket-

handkerchiefs. So you see that, except boots and a hat, it was a perfect outfit.

Aunt Fanny was charmed, and immediately sat down and wrote this note to the delightfully mysterious lady:

"DEAR MADAM: I have received your letter and the box of clothing. You have made for me a great pleasure, and a very serious mission, for I must not carelessly part with so good a gift. I must try to find just the right little girl, and as this will take time, you may not hear from me again for a week or ten days. With hearty thanks, believe me very cordially yours,

"AUNT FANNY."

And now she began to inquire among her friends for a very poor and very deserving family. One lady said she knew a poor man, who had fallen months ago from a high ladder, hurting his back so dreadfully that he had been in bed ever since. His wife, with all her efforts, could scarcely get bread for him and their children, and never any clothes. The eldest child, who was a girl, would be just the one for the beautiful and useful present.

"Oh yes; send her to me," said Aunt Fanny. "I am sure she will do."

It rained in torrents the next morning, but what did Nannie, the poor girl, care for that? Was she not to get a box full of new clothes? She ran all the long distance to Aunt Fanny's house. An old shawl was pinned over her head, her ragged dress hardly held together, and there were great holes in her boots. And what a long, lanky, square-shouldered girl she was, to be sure! and how she twisted

and wriggled as she said: "Please, ma'am, I'm sent for the clothes," and then her eyes grew so big and so wishful that Aunt Fanny brought out the box at once.

"Suppose we try the dress on," she said. "I am afraid that it will be short for you; but never mind that, if it fits in the waist."

The miserable ragged dress was taken off, and the new one put on. It was made to button in the back. Aunt Fanny pulled and tugged, but it would not come together; it did not fit at all; and she said, kindly:

"I am sorry, dear, but I am afraid you are too big for the clothes."

"Oh!" cried the child, bursting into tears. "Oh, ma'am, don't say that! Oh, I want them so much! I'll hold my breath if you will try to button it again! Oh, do try! I wish I was n't so big!"

Aunt Fanny tried, but it was of no use; the waist was at least four inches too narrow; and nearly crying herself because she was so sorry for Nannie, she took off the beautiful dress, and put the ragged one on again. Then she told Nannie not to be quite heart-broken, for she would try to find something for her that *would* fit. She hunted up a good dress of her own, and another larger one, which came out of a parcel sent "for the poor." This one would do for the hard-worked mother, and these, with some other things, she gave to the sobbing girl, and as it had stopped raining, she sent her home.

Then another child was recommended, but Aunt Fanny was afraid that her parents would sell these nice clothes for drink. They had sold other things which had been given to their children, and so this poor little one must be denied. Was not this miserable? But it only proves what wise folks tell us, that neither you, nor I, nor any one, can do wrong without causing some innocent person to suffer; so let us take heed what we do.

Well, the days went by; the right little girl did not appear, and Aunt Fanny was quite troubled. At last, a dear friend came to make a call, to whom was told the story of the clothes. Clapping her hands, she joyfully exclaimed:

"Why, I have the very child for you!—a dear, good little German girl. Her mother is dead; her father has deserted her and two elder sisters, who work at trades; they go away early in the morning and leave this little one to wash the dishes, and clean and tidy up the two small rooms they call their home. Then little Annie comes to my mission-school, and is such a good little scholar!—so quick, obedient and gentle. After school, she hurries home;—she makes up the fire; she washes and irons the clothes; she cooks their little bit of

dinner, and she has everything clean, neat and cheerful for her tired sisters when they get back at night. She tells them 'welcome home' in her sweet, quaint, German fashion; and—well—no matter how it storms without, love sends a warm, rich glow all through those poor little rooms, and makes them beautiful! The sisters spend their evenings reading, sewing, and telling each other all that has happened during the day; and then, contented and thankful, they say their simple prayers and go to rest. Why," said Mrs. A., "my husband and I once invited ourselves to take tea with them. We sent in all the goodies, of course, but they furnished the welcome, and we never have spent a pleasanter evening."

"But," said Aunt Fanny, hesitating just a little, "is this child poor enough to be the fortunate one?"

"Well, I think so. The elder girls, work as hard as they may, can only earn enough to meet the rent, and find food, light and fire. After these are paid for, there is very little left for clothes, and they were lamenting to me that 'liebchen Annie' was so badly off for warm petticoats and stockings, and yet they could not see their way to buy any."

"Poor little thing! she shall be the one; send her along," said Aunt Fanny.

And that settled the matter.

The next morning, a pale, pretty little girl came in, shy and trembling, saying, with a timid little smile:

"Mrs. A. sent me to you, ma'am."

"Did she tell you what I wanted you for?"

"No, ma'am."

And the little thing clasped her hands, and a questioning look stole into her gentle face, but she did not say a word.

Just at this moment Mrs. A. came hurrying in.

"Oh, here you are," she said to Annie. "Well, Aunt Fanny, she'll do, wont she?"

The little girl wondered what it was that she was to "do" for, as Aunt Fanny, laughing, went out of the room, and soon returned with the box. Her wonder increased, as the pretty dress was lifted out and "tried on." It fitted as if it had been made for her. The little white ruffles round the neck and hands, and the red bow on the pocket, were so becoming that both ladies exclaimed:

"Oh! now, is n't that nice!"

And Aunt Fanny added:

"Yes, we are right this time; Annie must have the clothes."

Then they took out and displayed, to the astonished gaze of the child, the gay Balmoral and flannel petticoats, the drawers, stockings, chemise and pocket-handkerchiefs, and ended by kissing Annie

on her cheek,—now crimson with excitement,—and saying:

"They are yours, dear,—all for you."

At first, Annie did not know what to make of it. Her dark eyes grew large and larger. She looked at Mrs. A., then at Aunt Fanny, and then at the new clothes. All at once, she gave a joyful little skip in the air, her eyes grew wildly happy, and clasping her hands, she exclaimed:

"Somebody—you ma'am—have given these beautiful new things to me. Is it so? Oh, a thousand thanks! Thank you a thousand times!"

"It is not I, dear, but a kind lady who made them for some little girl whom I was to choose, and I have chosen you. Can you write, Annie?"

"Not very well, ma'am."

"Never mind; I want you to write a little note, as nicely as you can, thanking that good lady. I do not know her name, but it will be sure to reach her."

Then Aunt Fanny made the clothes into as small a bundle as she could; but even then it filled the arms of that joyful little girl, who said that it did seem as if she could never wait till night to tell her sisters the good news. Then Aunt Fanny and Mrs. A. kissed her, and sent her home as happy as a queen,—yes, and a great deal happier.

And now a letter was written to the lady, and in

it she was told all that you have been reading here; and a few days after, Aunt Fanny received this answer:

"I thank you for writing to me about the disposition of the clothes, and very much for taking so much trouble to find a child to whom they would be most serviceable. The story of her life is quite touching, and it has been so gratifying to know something about one, in whose behalf I have spent so many pleasant hours in sewing. I like to sew for the poor, and if you know of any one in special need, I shall be glad to help them. I will no longer withhold my name, though I never wish to be known in any work of charity, except as a friend."

And then this good "friend" signed her name, and told Aunt Fanny how to send letters in future.

A few days after, little Annie's letter went to her "friend." It was written in the tiniest little letters, and looked as if a doll had written it. This is what it said:

"DEAR MADAM: Thank you, from my heart, for my beautiful new clothes. You are so kind, so very kind. I will try my best to deserve my blest fortune, and I am your grateful little

"ANNIE W."

Annie still lives with her sisters, and is their little maid-of-all-work,—scrubbing and rubbing, and sweeping and dusting, and cooking and washing, and yet finding time to go to school, for she well understands the great importance of a good education.

I think she deserved the new clothes. Don't you?

A DAY WITH THE PONIES.

BY JOSEPHINE NORMAN.



I AM going to spend the day at Oaklawn, just outside of the city of Buffalo, with my little cousins, Lutie, Alice and Louis, and thinking it too selfish to keep the pleasure to ourselves, will take with me any readers of the ST. NICHOLAS who care to go. We will start from the Square and drive along the "Avenue," our prettiest street. After a drive of nearly three miles, we draw near our destination, Oaklawn, the delight of the children in our fair city; for here are the Liliputian ponies about which we are going to tell you. Do you see that house of many gables, at the left? It stands with its barns and stables, in a broad expanse of about twenty acres of land,—the house is surrounded

by trees, under which we see some of these little ponies,—and the children hardly can wait until we drive up the short hill and enter the grounds, to jump from the carriage and run after their four-footed friends. But we must leave the children for a moment and speak to the lady of the house, Mrs. L—, who, recognizing the familiar shouts of the children, is coming to meet us with some of her dogs about her. She warmly welcomes us, and, sending away the carriage, we are ready for a long day's visit. First of all we will see the ponies; and here come the little girls, Lutie and Alice, already mounted on the ponies, Lucy and Rebecca, Louis running by them to see no harm can come to his little cousins; but you would not fear too great a draught on his manly strength (of eight years) if you could see the gentle amble of the ponies as they come toward us with their accustomed burdens, and

stop of their own accord to get the usual petting from the elder members of the party. The children are in great glee, and off go the three, with some of the dogs after them, as happy as children

Islands to buy ponies for her, but with instructions not to bring any one that was over forty inches in height. After six months he returned with Lucy, Rebecca, May Ensigen and Jessie; he had brought



THE FOUR-IN-HAND. (AFTER A PHOTOGRAPH FROM LIFE.)

can be; and, as they are evidently going to see the other ponies, we will walk after them at our leisure.

Mrs. L— takes us to make the first call upon the aged grandmother, the pony Fanny, given to her nearly thirty years ago. Fanny is now blind, but is kept alive by the kind attentions of her mistress; she has the freedom of the grounds, and, as no one on the place is ever allowed to tease any animal, is much happier than she could be anywhere else. Then we look at Matilda Stuart and Louise Deshler, daughters of Fanny. They are dark bay, about forty-eight inches high (the largest ponies that Mrs. L— has); with them are Hannah, a bay, of forty inches, and Artaxerxes Longimanus, a black beauty of about the same height.

Now, little ones, get your mamma's tape-measure or brother's rule, so that you can understand just how high these little ponies are that we have found in the orchard. You must measure the exact height from the ground. They are so very small that you will hardly believe that there are such perfect little horses in the world. They are smaller than General Tom Thumb's ponies; he has tried to purchase some of Mrs. L—, but she never will sell a pony to be put in a show, for fear it might be ill treated.

Lucy and Rebecca are here with the children, and all the other ponies are coming toward us, so we can see them without any trouble. In 1865, Mrs. L— sent a Scotchman to the Shetland

a fifth, which died on the passage; but it was thought very fortunate that he was able to get four to America; they are rarely transported safely, the change in food being so great. This man, however, wisely brought enough of their own food to get them safely to America without any change being necessary. And what do you think that food was? I should like to wait and see if any of you could guess; but, as I cannot, I must even tell you that it was dried fish and sea-weed! This seems strange food for horses; but these ponies utterly scorned grain, grass or hay, until they found they could have no more fish to eat.

Lucy, the eldest, is a black pony, so old that her head is gray and so gentle that nothing can startle her, and she is always ready to be driven or ridden by the children. Rebecca, a brown, is often called grandmother; she is so very staid and correct, that she never will stray away, no matter how many gates are open, and will even virtuously pass by the gate of the kitchen garden if it happens to be open,—a temptation that the others never try to resist. Rebecca has a great affection for a very large family horse named George, and, during the summer, it is one of the sights of the place to go to the stable and see George and Rebecca keeping each other free from their common enemy, the fly. Rebecca will stand by the heels of George, whisking her tail around his legs, and he will swing his heavy tail about her body, performing the same

kindly service of driving the flies away; they stand in this way for hours, keeping each other very comfortable.

May Ensign, also brown, is the swiftest pony in the collection; and these last-mentioned ponies, Lucy, Rebecca, and May Ensign, are thirty-eight inches in height. Jessie is the prettiest; she is mouse-colored, with a dark line from mane to tail, and is smaller than the others, being not quite thirty-eight inches high. Here also we find the twin brothers, Henry Ward Beecher and Charley, only thirty-six inches high; they are so perfectly matched that you cannot tell them apart. They came to this city four or five years ago, with a drove of sheep from Scotland; the drover brought them with him, meaning to take them West; but, upon reaching Buffalo, he found them so emaciated, that he feared to take them farther, and sold them to a gentleman in the city, who afterward sold them to their present mistress. They are justly considered one of the most curious sights of the city, and when their mistress appears in the park with the twins, as leaders in her "four-in-hand," do you wonder that the children think that there never was such a wonderful equipage seen before! The grown people think so, too, judging

by the great number that invariably follow her as she sits in her little carriage (made, in London, to suit the size of the smallest ponies) and drives along, sometimes with a child beside her, of whom, perhaps, she does not even know the name, but who "wants to wide," and with her groom sitting behind in the rumble. But we have not yet mentioned the three ponies which are considered by their mistress as her "gems." Now, my dears, have you the tape-measure or rule mentioned before? If so, find thirty-two inches, that is the height of a fine little bay pony, Frank Tracy. Now, look at this beauty, Agnes Ethel, the most perfect little animal, and only thirty inches high; and at this other fellow, George Washington (so named, because it was a Centennial colt), of the same height as Agnes Ethel, thirty inches. Does it seem possible that such ponies are in daily use in a prosaic, matter-of-fact country like ours? But they really are, and many strangers go to see them; and, I presume, some of you children may have heard of them before; but if any of you doubt, you can ask one of the publishers of ST. NICHOLAS, for he was at Oaklawn a few years ago, and saw some of these very ponies, and any of you can see them, if you like, and ever come to our good city.



HALF A DOZEN HOUSEKEEPERS.

BY KATHARINE D. SMITH.

CHAPTER IV.

YOU may think, dear readers, that Lilla's "mortification" was quite an excitement in this enterprising young household; yet I assure you that never a day passed but a ridiculous adventure of some kind overtook the girls. The daily bulletin which they carried over to Mrs. C.'s boarding-house kept the worthy inmates in constant wonderment as to what would happen next. Sometimes there was an arranged programme for the next day, prepared the night before, but oftener, things happened "of themselves," and when they do that, you know, pleasure seems a deal more satis-

fying and delightful, because it is unexpected. Uncle Harry was in great demand, and very often made one of the gay party of young folks off for a frolic. They defied King Winter openly and went on all sorts of excursions, even on a bona-fide picnic, notwithstanding the two feet of snow on the ground. The "how" of it was this: On Friday the boys, Hugh Pennell, Jack Brayton, Belle's cousin, and Geoffrey Strong turned the great bare hall in the top of the old Winship family house—Uncle Harry's—into a perfect bower.

By the way, I haven't told you about Geoffrey Strong yet, because there was not time, but he is a lad I should like all my girl readers to

know. He was only seventeen years old, but had finished his sophomore year at Bowdoin College, and was teaching the district school that he might partly earn the money necessary to take him through the course. He was as sturdy and strong as his name, or as one of the stout pine-trees of his native state; as gentle and chivalrous as a boy knight of the olden time; as true and manly a lad, and withal as good and earnest a teacher—notwithstanding his youth—as the little country urchins and urchinesses could wish. Mr. Winship was his guardian, and thus he was quite one of the family.

Well, the boys were making a picnic ground when I interrupted my story with that long parenthesis. They took a pair of old drop-curtains and made a dark green carpet, stretched across the floor smoothly and tacked down—wreathed the posts, and trimmed doors and windows with evergreens, and then planted spruce and cedar and hemlock trees in the corners and scattered them about the room, firmly rooted in painted nail-kegs.

"It looks rather jolly, boys, does n't it," cried Jack. "But I guess we've gone as far as we can—we can't make birds and flowers and brooks!"

"What's the difficulty?" asked energetic Geoff.

"We'll borrow Mrs. Winship's two cages of canaries and Mrs. Adams's two; then we'll bring up Miss Belle's pet parrot, and all together we'll be musical enough."

This they accordingly did, and their forest became tuneful. The next stroke of genius came from Hugh Pennell. He found bunches of white and yellow everlasting at home with which he mixed some cleverly constructed bright tissue-paper flowers (of mysterious botanical structure) and adorned the room. And, behold, their forest blossomed!

"But we're through now, boys," said Hugh dejectedly, as he put his last bed of whiteweed and buttercups under a shady tree. (They were made of paper, and planted artistically in a chopping-tray.) "We can't get up a brook, and a brook is a handy thing at a picnic, too."

"I have an idea," cried Jack, who was mounted on a step-ladder and engaged in tying a stuffed owl and a blue-jay on to a tree-top. "I have an idea. We can fill the ice-water tank, put it on a bracket, and let the water run into a tub; then station a boy in the corner to keep filling the tank from the tub. There's your stagnant pool and your running streamlet! What could be more romantic?"

"Out with him!" shouted Geoff. "He ought to be drowned for proposing such an apology for a brook."

"Well," said Jack, "the sound would be watery

and trickling. I've no doubt the girls would be charmed."

"We'll brook no further argument on the subject," retorted Hugh; "the afternoon is running away with us. We might bring up the bath-tub, or the watering-trough, sink it in an evergreen bank and surround it with house-plants, but I don't think it would satisfy us exactly. I'll tell you, let us give up the brook and build a sort of what-do-you-call-'em for a retreat, in one corner."

After some explanations from Hugh about his plan, the boys finally succeeded in manufacturing something romantic and ingenious. Two blooming oleanders in boxes from Mrs. Winship's parlor, a hemlock tree with a mystic seat under it, an evergreen arch above, a little rockery built with a dozen stones from the old wall behind the barn, and potted scarlet geraniums set in among them, two hanging baskets and a bird-cage. With nothing save an air-tight stove to warm it into life, the cold bare hall was magically changed into a fairy green forest vocal with singing birds and radiant with blooming flowers.

The boys swung their hats in irrepressible glee.

"Wont that be a surprise to the people though! Wont they think of the desert blossoming as the rose!" cried Hugh.

"I fancy it wont astonish Uncle Harry and Aunt Emily much," answered Jack, dryly, "inasmuch as we've nearly borrowed them out of house and home during the operation. The girls will be—stunned—though. Just imagine Belle's eyes! I told them we'd see to sweeping and heating the hall, but they don't expect any decorations. Well, I'm off! Lock the door, Geoff, and guard it like a dragon; we meet at eleven to-morrow morning, do we? Be on hand sharp, and let us all go in and view the scene together."

Jack and Hugh started for home, and Geoff down-stairs to run a gauntlet of questioning from Jo Fenton (present in the kitchen on one of the borrowing tours of the day) as to why so much mysterious hammering was going on.

While these preparations were in progress the six juvenile housekeepers were undergoing abject suffering in their cookery for the picnic. It had been a day of disasters from beginning to end—the first really mournful one of their experience.

It commenced bright and early, too; in fact, was all ready for them before they awoke in the morning, and the coal fire began it, for it went out in the night. Everybody knows what it is to build a fire in a large coal stove; it was Jo's turn for fires, and I regret to say this circumstance made her a little cross, in fact, audibly so.

After much hunting for kindling-wood, however,

much chattering of teeth (for the thermometer "was below zero"), much vicious banging of stove doors, and clattering of hods and shovels, that trouble was overcome. But, dear me, it was only the first drop of a pouring rain of accidents, and at last the girls accepted it as a fatal shower which must fall before the weather could clear, thus resigning themselves to the inevitable.

The breakfast was as bad as a breakfast knew how to be. The girls were all cooks to-day in the exciting preparation for the picnic, for they wanted to take especially tempting dainties in order that they might astonish more experienced providers. Sadie had scorched the milk toast. Edith, that most precise and careful of all little women under the sun, had broken a platter and burned her fingers. Lilla had browned a delicious omelet, waved the spider triumphantly in the air, astonished at her own success, when, alas, the smooth little circlet slipped ill-naturedly out into the coal hod. Lilla stood still in horror and dismay, while Belle fished it hastily out, looking very crumpled, sooty, shrunken and generally penitent, if an omelet can assume that expression. She slapped it on the table severely, and said, with a little choke and a tear in her voice:

"That is going to be rinsed and fried over and eaten. There is n't another thing in the house for breakfast. Alice put cream-of-tartar into the buckwheats, instead of saleratus, and measured it with a tablespoon besides, and I'm ashamed to borrow anything more of grandma."

"Never!" cried Allie, with much determination. "Sooner eat omelet and coal-hod too! Never mind the breakfast! What shall we take to the picnic?"

"Mince-pies," cried Jo, animatedly.

"Goose," answered Belle. "There is n't time to make minced-meat, of course."

"At any rate, we must have jelly-cake," said Lilla, with decision, while dishing up the injured omelet for the second time. "We'll make the delicacies. Mrs. Pennell and Mrs. Winship will be sure to bring bread and meat and common things."

"Oh, tarts, tarts!" exclaimed Edith in an ecstasy of reminiscence. "I have n't had tarts for a 'perfect' age! Do you think we could manage them?"

"They must be easy enough," answered Sadie, with calm authority. "Cut a hole out of the middle of each round thing, then fill it up with jelly and bake it; that's simple."

"Glad you think so," responded Edith, with an air of deep melancholy and cynicism, as she prepared to wash the breakfast china and found an empty dish-water pot. "I should think the jelly

would grow hard and crusty before the tarts baked, but I suppose it's all right. Everything we touch to-day is sure to fail."

"Oh!

how

much

better

if you

said,

I'll—I'll—I'll

try—try—try!" sang Belle, in a

spasm of gayety.

"Oh, how much sadder you will feel when you've tried, by and by," retorted Edith.

And so the time passed until at one o'clock Allie Forsaith went to bed with a headache, leaving the kitchen in a state of general confusion and uproar. I cannot bear to tell you all the sorry incidents of that dreadful day, but Belle had shared in the blunders with the rest. She had gone to the store-room for citron, and had stumbled on a jar of frozen "something" very like minced-meat. This, indeed, was a precious discovery! She flew back to the kitchen, crying:

"Hurrah! We'll have the pies, after all, girls! Mamma has left a pot of minced-meat in the pantry. It's frozen, but it will be all right. You trust to me. I've made pies before, and these shall not be a failure."

The spider was heated, and enough meat for three pies put in to thaw. It thawed,—naturally, the fire being very hot, and presently became very thin and curious in its appearance.

"It looks like soup, with pieces of chopped apple in it," said Lilla to Belle, who was patting down a very tough, substantial bottom crust on a pie-plate.

"We'll—I, it does!" owned the head-cook, frankly; "but I suppose it will boil down or thicken up in baking. I don't like to taste it, somehow."

"Very natural," said Lilla, dryly. "It does n't look 'tasty'; and, to tell the truth, it does not look at all as I've been brought up to imagine minced-meat ought to look."

"I can't be responsible for your 'bringing up,' Lill. Please pour it in, and I'll hold the plate."

The mixture trickled in; Belle put a very lumpy, spotted dough coverlid on it, slashed an original design in the middle, and deposited it in the oven, with a sigh of relief.

Just at this happy moment, Betty Bettis, Mrs. Winship's girl, walked in with a can of kerosene.

"Don't you think that's funny-looking minced-meat, Betty?" asked Sadie, pointing to the spider.

Betty the wise looked at it one moment, and then said, with youthful certainty and disdain:

"'T aint no more mince-meat than a cat's foot."
This was decisive, and its utterance fell like a thunder-bolt upon the kitchen-maids.

"Gracious!" cried Belle, dropping her good English and her rolling-pin at the same time. "What do you mean? It looked exactly like it before it melted. What is it, then?"

"Suet," answered cruel Betty Bettis. "Your ma chopped it and done it up in morlasses for her suet plum-puddens this winter. It's thick when it's cold; and, when it was froze, like enough it did look like pie-meat, with a good deal of apple in it; but it aint no sech a thing."

doughnutty hand, and trying to wipe away her tears with an apron redolent of hot fat. "You can use the rest of the pie-crust for tarts, and my doughnuts are swelling up be-yoo-ti-ful-ly!"

Belle withdrew the roller from her merry, tearful eyes, and said, with savage emphasis:

"If any of you dare tell this to-morrow, or let Uncle Harry or the boys know about it, I'll — I don't know what I'll do," finished she, weakly.

"That's a fearful threat," laughed Jo.

"The King of France and fifty thousand men,
Pluck'd forth their swords! and put them up again."

And so this cloud passed over, and another and



"'T AINT NO MORE MINCE-MEAT THAN A CAT'S FOOT!"

This was too much. If I am to relate truly the adventures of this half-dozen suffering little maidens, I must tell you that Belle entirely lost that sweet, sunny temper of hers for a moment; caught up the unoffending spider, filled with molasses and floating bits of suet; carried it steadily and swiftly to the back-door; hurled it into a snow-bank; slammed the door, and sat down on a flour-firkin, burying her face in the very dingy roller-towel. The girls stopped laughing.

"Never mind, Bluebell," cooed Sadie, sympathetically smoothing her curly hair with a very

yet another, with comforting little gleams of sunshine between, till at length it was seven o'clock in the evening before the dishes were washed and the kitchen tidied; then six as tired young housewives stretched themselves before the parlor-fire as a bright blaze often shines upon. Belle, pale, pretty little hostess, was curled up on the sofa with her eyes closed. The other girls were lounging in different attitudes of dejection, all with from one to three burned fingers enveloped in rags. The results of the day's labor were painfully meager: a colander full of doughnuts, some currant-buns

and a loaf of dark cake tolerably light. Out in the kitchen-closet lay a melancholy pile of failures: Allie's pop-overs, which had refused to pop; Sadie's tarts, rocky and tough; and a bride's-cake that would have made any newly married couple feel as if they were at the funeral of their own stomachs. The girls had flown too high in their journey through the cook-book. Belle and Jo could really cook plain things very nicely, and were considered remarkable caterers by their admiring family of school-mates; but the dainties they had attempted were entirely beyond their powers; hence the pile of wasted "goodies" in the closet.

"Oh dear!" sighed Lilla. "Nobody has spoken a word for an hour, and I don't wonder, if everybody is as tired as I. Shall we ever get rested enough to go to-morrow?"

"I was thinking," said Edith, dreamily, "that we have only seven days more to stay. If they were all to be as horrible as this, I should n't care much; but we have had such fun, I dread to break up housekeeping."

"Well," said Belle, waking up a little, "we will crowd everything possible into that week, and make it a real carnival time. To-morrow is Saturday and the picnic; on Monday or Tuesday we'll have some sort of a 'pow-wow' (as Uncle Harry says) for the boys, in return for their invitation, and then we'll think of something perfectly grand and stupendous for Friday, our last day of rest. It will take from that till Monday to get the house into something like order." (This with a remorseful recollection of the terrible "back bedroom," where everything imaginable had been dumped for a week past.)

"I have n't finished trimming our hats," called Allie, faintly, from the bed. "I'll do it in the morning while you are packing the lunch."

The girls had tried to get up something jaunty, picturesque and summerish for a picnic costume; but the weather being too cold for a change of dress, they had only bought broad straw hats at the country store,—hats that farmers wore in haying-time, with high crowns and wide brims.

They had turned up one side of them coquet-tishly, and adorned it with funny silhouettes made of black paper, descriptive of their various adventures. Lilla's, for instance, had a huge ink-bottle and sponge; Belle's, a mammoth pie and frying-pan. Around the crowns they tied scarfs of different colors, interwoven with bunches of dried grasses, oats and everlasting.

Half-past eight found them all sleeping soundly as dormice; and the next morning, with the reboundiveness and enthusiasm that youth brings, they awoke entirely refreshed.

The picnic was a glorious success. It was a

clear, bright day, and not very cold; so that, with a good fire, they were able to have a couple of windows open, and felt more as if they were out in the fresh air. The surprise and delight of the girls knew no bounds when they were ushered into their novel picnic-ground, and even the older people avowed they had never seen such a miracle of ingenuity. The scene was as pretty a one as can be imagined, though the young people little knew how lovely a picture they helped to make in the midst of their pastoral surroundings. Six charming faces they were, happy with girlish joy, sweet and bright from loving hearts, and pure and tender from innocent, earnest living. Belle was radiant, issuing orders for the spread of the feast, flying here and there, laughing over a stuffed snake under a bush (Geoff's device), and talking merry nonsense with Hugh, her arch eyes shining with mischief under her great straw hat.

The canaries sang, and Marcus Aurelius, the parrot, talked, as if this were the last opportunity they ever expected to have; the worsted butterflies and stuffed birds fluttered and swayed and danced on the quivering tree-twigs beneath them almost as if they were alive.

The table-cloth was spread on the floor, real picnic fashion (the boys would allow neither tables nor chairs), and the lunch was simply delectable. Mrs. Winship, Mrs. Brayton and Mrs. Pennell, with affectionate forethought, had brought everything that school girls and boys particularly "affect,"—jelly-cake, tarts and hosts of other goodies. How the girls remembered their closetful of "attempts" at home; how they roguishly exchanged glances, yet never disclosed their failures; how they discoursed learnedly upon yeast-powder *vs.* saleratus, raw potato *versus* boiled potato yeast, and upon many questions of household economy with great dignity and assurance!

In the afternoon, they played all sorts of games,—some quiet, more not at all so,—until at five o'clock, nearly dark these short days, they left their make-believe forest and trudged home through the snow, baskets under their arms, declaring it a mistaken idea that picnics were entirely summer affairs.

"What a gl—orious time we've had!" exclaimed Jo, as they busied themselves about the home dining-room. "Yesterday seems like a horrible nightmare, or at least it would if it had n't happened in the day-time. The things we carried were not so v—e—r—y bad, after all! I was really proud of the buns, and Sadie's doughnuts were as 'swelled up' as Mrs. Brayton's."

"And a great deal yellower and spotted-er," quoth Edith, in a sly aside.

"Well," admitted Sadie, ruefully, "there was full enough saleratus in them; but I think it very

unbecoming in the maker of the bride's-cake to say anything about other people's mistakes! Bride's-cake, indeed!" finished she, with a scornful smile.

"True!" said Edith, much crushed, by this heartless allusion to what had been the most thorough and expensive failure of the day; "I can't deny it. Proceed with your sarcasm."

"This house looks as if it were going to ride out!" exclaimed Alice. "Do let us try to straighten it before Sunday! The closets are all in snarls, the kitchen's in a mess, and the least said about the bedroom the better."

Accordingly, being inspired by Alice's enthusiasm, they began to work and improve the hours like a whole hiveful of busy bees. They put on big aprons and washed pans and pots that had been evaded for two days, made fish-balls for breakfast, dusted, scrubbed, washed, mended, darned and otherwise reduced the house to that especial and delicious kind of order which is likened unto apple-pie. And thus one week of the joys and trials of this merry Half a dozen Housekeepers was over and gone.

CHAPTER V.

MONDAY morning broke. Such a cold, dismal drizzly morning! The wind whistled and blew about the cottage until Lilla suggested tying the clothes-line round the chimneys and fastening it to the strong pine-trees in front for greater safety. It snowed at six o'clock, it hailed at seven, rained at eight, stopped at nine, and presently commenced again to go through the same varied programme. After breakfast, Belle went to the window and stood dreamily flattening her nose against the pane, while the others busied themselves about the room.

"Well, girls," said she at length, "we've had four different kinds of weather this morning, so it may clear off after all, but it does n't look like it. It's too stormy to go anywhere or for anybody to come to us, so we shall have to try violently in every possible way to amuse ourselves. But I must run over to Miss Mirandy's for the milk before it rains harder. Perhaps I shall stumble over some excitement on the way: who knows!"

So saying, she ran out, and in a few moments appeared in the yard wrapped in a bright red water-proof, the hood pulled over her head, and framing her roguish rosy face. In ten minutes she returned breathless from a race across the garden and a vain attempt to keep her umbrella right side out. She entered the room in her usual breezy way, leaving the doors all open, and sank into a chair with an expression of mysterious mirth in her eyes.

"Well!" cried the scarlet-mantled saucy little maiden; "I have the most enormous, improbable,

unguessable surprise for you; you never will think, and anyway I can't wait to tell, so here it is: We are all invited to tea this afternoon with Miss Mirandy and Miss Jane! Is n't that 'ridikilis?'"

"Do tell, Isabel," squeaked Jo with a comically irreverent imitation of Miss Jane. "Air you a going to except?"

"Oh yes, Belle, we'd better go," said Edith Lambert. "I should like to see the inside of that funny old house, and I dare say we shall enjoy it."

"We are remarkably favored," laughed Belle. "I don't think anybody has been invited there since the Sewing Circle met with them three years ago. They live such a quiet, strange, lonely life! Their mother and father died when they were very young, more than fifty years ago. They were quite wealthy, and left this big house all furnished and quantities of lovely old-fashioned dishes and pictures. All the rooms are locked, but I'll try to melt Miss Mirandy's heart and get her to show us some of her relics. Scarcely anything has been changed in all these years, except that they have bought a cooking-stove. Miss Jane hates new-fangled things, and is really ashamed of the stove, I think; as to having a sewing-machine or a yeast-cake, or an egg-beater, or a carpet-sweeper,—why she would as soon think of wearing an overskirt and a bustle! I believe there is n't such a curious house, nor another pair of such dried-up, half-nice, half-disagreeable people in the country."

And Belle's criticism was quite just. The old house stood in a garden which, in the sweet spring-time, was filled with odorous lilacs, blossoming apple-trees, and long rows of currant and gooseberry bushes. In the summer, too, there were actual groves of asparagus, gaudy sunflowers, bright hollyhocks, gay marigolds, royal fleur-de-lis,—all respectable old-fashioned posies, into whose hearts the humming-birds loved to thrust their dainty beaks and steal their sweetness. Then there were little beds paved round with white clamshells, where were growing trembling little bride's-tears, bachelor-buttons, larkspur, and china pinks. No modern blossoms would Miss Mirandy allow within these sacred ancient places, no begonias, gladiolas, and "sech," with their new-fangled, heathenish, unpronounceable names. The old flowers were good enough for her; and certainly they made a blooming spot about the dark house.

Now indeed there was neither a leaf nor a bud to be seen; snow-birds perched and twittered on the naked apple-boughs, and drifts of snow lay over the sleeping little seed-souls of the hollyhocks and marigolds, keeping them just alive and no more, in a freezing, cold-blooded sort of way common to snow. But if the garden outside looked like a relic of the olden time, the rooms

inside seemed even more so. The "keeping-room" had been refurnished fifteen or twenty years before, but so well had it been kept that there still hovered about it a painful air of newness. Over the stiff black hair-cloth sofa hung a funeral wreath in a shell frame, surrounded by the Sawyer family photographs,—husbands and wives always taken in affectionate attitudes, that their relations might never be misunderstood. In a corner stood the mahogany what-not, with its bead watch-cases, shells, and glass globe covering worsted flowers, together with more family pictures in black cases on the top shelf, and a marvelous blue china vase holding peacock's feathers. Then there was a gorgeous "drawn in" rug before the fire-place, with impossible purple roses and pink leaves on its surface, and a tall three-legged table holding a magnificent lamp with a glass fringe around it, and a large piece of red flannel floating in the kerosene.

All these glories the girls were allowed to view as a great favor granted at Belle's earnest request. They examined the parlor and the curiosities in the dining-room cupboard with awe-struck faces, though their sobriety was almost overcome at sight of some of the works of art which Miss Mirandy held up for their reverential admiration.

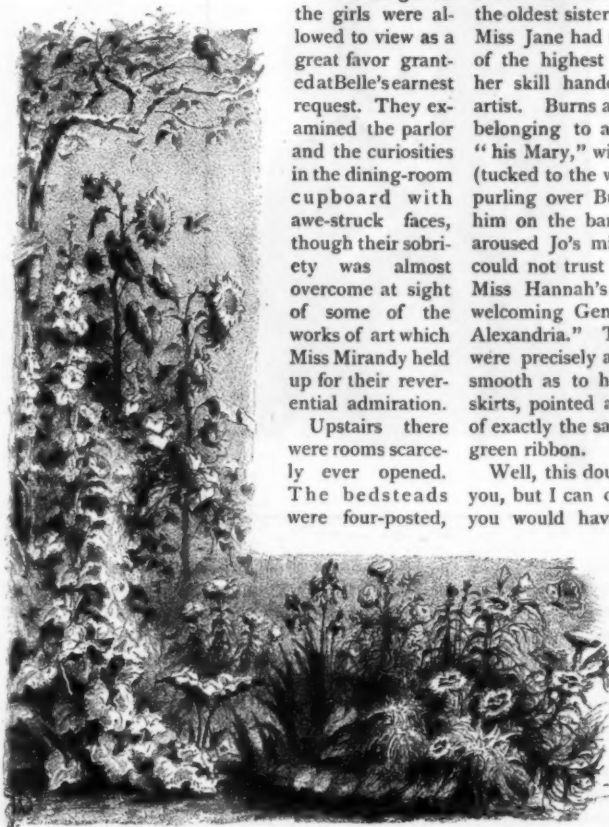
Upstairs there were rooms scarcely ever opened. The bedsteads were four-posted,

and so high with many feather beds, that their sleepy occupants must have ascended a step-ladder, or climbed up the posts hand over hand and dropped down into the downy depths. The counterpanes and comforters were quilted in wonderful patterns. There was a wild-goose chase, a log-cabin, a rocky mountain, an Irish plaid, and a "charm quilt" in twelve hundred pieces, no two alike. The windows in the "best chamber" had white cotton curtains with fringe; the looking-glass was long and narrow with a yellow-painted frame, and a picture, in the upper half, of Napoleon crossing the Alps, the Alps in question being very pointed and of a sky-blue color, while Napoleon, in full-dress uniform, with never an outrider nor a guide, was galloping up and over on a skittish-looking pony. These things nearly upset Jo's gravity, and she quite lost Miss Jane's favor by coughing down an irrepressible giggle when she was being shown a painting of Burns and his Mary, done in oils by Miss Hannah, the oldest sister of the family, and long since dead. Miss Jane had no doubt that Hannah's genius was of the highest order, although the specimens of her skill handed down would astonish a modern artist. Burns and his Mary were seated on a bank belonging to a landscape certainly not Scottish; "his Mary," with a sort of pink tarlatan dress on (tucked to the waist), while a brook was seemingly purling over Burns's coat-tail spread out behind him on the bank. It was this peculiarity which aroused Jo's mirth (as it well might), so that she could not trust herself to examine with the others Miss Hannah's last and finest effort,—"Maidens welcoming General Washington in the streets of Alexandria." The maidens, thirteen in number, were precisely alike in form and feature, all very smooth as to hair, long as to waists, short as to skirts, pointed as to toes, and carrying bouquets, of exactly the same size and structure, tied up with green ribbon.

Well, this doubtless seems all very tiresome to you, but I can only say that had you been there, you would have laughed with Jo and Lilla, or politely smothered a smile with Sadie and Alice.

The tour of inspection finished, the girls sat down to chat over their fancy work, while the two ladies went out to get supper.

"My reputation is gone," whispered Jo, solemnly. "To think that I should have laughed at last when I had been behaving so beautifully all the afternoon; but Mr. Burns was the last straw that broke the camel's back of my politeness; I could



"POSIES INTO WHICH THE HUMMING-BIRDS THRUST DAINTY BEAKS."

n't have helped it if Miss Mirandy had eaten me instead of frowning at me," said she.

"Well," cried Lilla, jumping up impulsively and knocking down her chair in so doing, "I'm going to beard the lion in his den, and see if they won't let me help them. Don't you want to come, Jo?" The two girls ran across the long cold hall, opened the kitchen door stealthily, and Jo asked in her sweetest tones, "Can't we set the table or help you in any way, Miss Mirandy?"

"No, I thank you, Josephine; there is nothing to do, or leastways you would n't know where

fingers, so that when she finished they were perfect little calendars of suffering; however, this only concerned herself, and she did not murmur, as most of her ordinary mistakes implicated other people.

At half past five they sat down to supper; and such a supper! Miss Mirandy was evidently anxious to impress the young people. The best pink "chany" set had been unearthed, and there were several odd dishes besides of great magnificence. There were light soda-biscuits as large as saucer plates, and there was cold buttermilk bread; a blue-and-white bowl held tomato preserves, while



"CAN'T WE SET THE TABLE, MISS MIRANDY?"

things were, and would n't be any good. The Porter girl may come in if she wants to, but two of you would only clutter up the kitchen."

So Lilla went in meekly, and poor Jo flew back to the parlor smarting under a bitter sense of disgrace. The sisters fortunately knew nothing of Lilla's aptitude for blunders, else she never would have been suffered to touch their precious household gods. As it was, by dint of extreme care she managed to get the plum sauce on the table, and set the chairs around without any serious disaster. To be sure, in cutting the dried beef, she notched memoranda of the pieces shaved on each of her

a glass one was full of delicious apple-sauce cooked in maple syrup; then there was a round creamy cottage-cheese, white as a snowball; a huge golden dried pumpkin pie, baked in a deep yellow plate; the brownest and plummiest and indigestible-est of all plummy cakes, with doughnuts and sugar gingerbread besides. This array of good things being taken in with rapid and rabid glances, the girls exchanged involuntary looks of delight, and even emitted audible sighs of happiness. To say that they did justice to the repast would be a feeble expression, for in truth the meals of their own preparation were irregular as to time, indifferent

as to quality, and sometimes, when they calculated carelessly or unwisely, even small as to quantity.

After tea was over, each of the girls was required to give, in answer to a string of questions asked, her entire family history; for no tidbit of information concerning other people's affairs was uninteresting to Miss Jane or Miss Mirandy. This cross-examination being finished, they rose to go, not being able to bear any longer the quiet, proper, suppressive atmosphere that surrounded them. When they had taken their leave, and the sound of their merry voices and ringing laughter floated in from the garden, Miss Mirandy sank into a chair, and waved a fan excitedly to and fro, her mouse-colored complexion having taken on quite a pink flush from the unwonted dissipation.

"Wall, Jane," said she, "it's over now, and we've done our dooty by Mis' Winship: she's a good neighbor, and I wanted to act right by Isabel when her Ma was away, but of all the crazy 'stiv'ring' girls I ever see, them do beat all; though they did behave tolerable well this afternoon."

(To be continued.)

ELISABETH'S ROSEN.

VON KATHARINE JACKSON.

[We shall be glad to hear from the girls and boys concerning this story. All translations received before New Year's Day shall be acknowledged in our March number.]

AUF steiler Höhe steht ein altes Schloss. Man nennt es die Wartburg. Wisst ihr auch wer dort gewohnt hat? Vor etwa siebenhundert Jahren war es die heilige Elisabeth, und später, im sechszehnten Jahrhundert der grosse Reformator Luther. Aber heute erzähle ich nur von der heiligen Elisabeth.

Sie war in Ungarn geboren, eines König's Tochter, und wurde als Kind in goldener Wiege nach Thüringen gebracht, wo sie mit einem Fürsten vermählt ward, der selbst noch ein Knabe war und Ludwig hiess. Seine Heimath war die Wartburg, und ringsum gehörten ihm Land und Leute. Elisabeth aber wuchs nicht nur schön und anmuthig heran, sie hatte auch ein frommes und überaus liebreiches Gemüth und erbarmte sich besonders der Armen und Dürftigen.

Das gefiel anfangs ihrem Gemahl, der sie sehr lieb hatte. Er wehrte ihr auch nicht wenn sie in das Thal stieg um eigenhändig die Armen und Kranken zu speisen, zu kleiden und sie zu trösten. Wem dies aber nicht gefiel, das waren die Höflinge ihres Gemahls. Von Neid und Misgunst getrieben, verdächtigten sie die Fürstin bei dem letztern, und, in einem Augenblick des Zornes, verbot er ihr endlich vom Schlosse herabzusteigen

"They seemed to enjoy their vittles," said Miss Jane; "I never see girls make a heartier meal. We ought to be very thankful we hev n't any young ones or men-folks to cook for, Mirandy."

And with this expression of gratitude on her lips, she lighted a candle, and after locking up the house securely, the two went to their bedroom to sleep the sleep of the calm and the virtuous.

Their merry visitors, undisturbed by the pelting rain from above, and the deep "slosh" beneath, waded over into their own grounds with many a hearty laugh and jest.

"Oh, how delightful our own sitting-room looks!" exclaimed Sadie, as they opened the door and gathered about the cheerful fire in the grate. And indeed it did, after the stiff, prim arrangement of the rooms they had left. The flickering blaze cast soft shadows on the walls, and touched the marbles on the brackets with rosy tints; the canary birds had their heads hidden under their wings fast asleep, and the dog and cat were snoozing peacefully together on the hearth-rug.

und wie eine Magd den Armen Almosen und Hülfe zu spenden.

Sie aber konnte es nicht über das Herz bringen die armen Hülfbedürftigen zu vernachlässigen, und als eines Tages ihr Gatte hinunter in die Stadt gegangen war, schlich sie sich zum Thore hinaus, mit einem Korbe voll Brod, Fleisch und Eiern unter dem Mantel. Noch war sie nicht halb den Berg hinab, da kommt ihr plötzlich der Fürst mit seinem Gefolge entgegen, und fragt sie in strengem Ton, was sie unter dem Mantel trage? Bleich vor Schrecken, antwortete sie: "Es sind Rosen, gnädigster Gemahl!" Der Fürst schlug den Mantel zurück, und da lagen in dem Korbe die schönsten halberblühten Rosen!

Von diesem Anblick tief ergriffen, umarmte der Fürst sein frommes Weib, bat sie um Verzeihung und verbot ihr fortan nicht mehr dem Drange ihres mildthätigen Herzens zu folgen.

Die Höflinge wurden wegen ihres niedrigen und böswilligen Wesens von ihrem Herrn mit strengen Worten gestraft. Das Beste von der Geschichte aber ist, dass die Rosen der Elisabeth sich alle wieder in nährende Speise verwandelten sobald sie in die Mitte der sie erwartenden Armen trat, deren Hunger sie nun zu stillen vermochte.



THE LITTLE SWEET CAKE.

BY CHARLOTTE SOULARD.

Do you like sweet cakes? No?

Oh, you say, "Yes." You do like them. That is better. So do I. But did you ever have a sweet cake jump out of your hand and run away from you,—a spicy sweet cake, with a temper of its own? I did once, but it ran in a queer way; for it was round and had no legs. How I chased that cake, all the way down the garden walk! Some one else chased it too. It was Pompey, our dog. But he ran so very, very fast that he tumbled past it, head-over-heels. I beat him, and caught the cake. He barked at every bite I took. The cake was quiet enough; and it never ran away any more. This reminds me of a story my dear grandmother told me when I was a little bit of a girl. You shall hear it:

One bright summer's day an old woman was baking some little sweet cakes, while her husband sat near the kitchen door smoking his pipe, and on the stove stood a small black kettle which the old woman always used when she boiled her potatoes. When the old woman took the pan from the oven, one of the little sweet cakes hopped out of it and ran away. Pretty soon it met a boy who said to it: "Good-morning, little sweet cake, where did you come from?" It said: "I ran away from the little old woman and the little old man, from the little old kettle and the little old pan, and now I will run away from you if I can." Then it ran away from the boy.

After it had gone a little farther it met a girl, and she said to it: "Good-morning, little sweet cake, where did you come from?" It made the same answer: "I ran away from the little old woman and the little old man, from the little old kettle and the little old pan, and now I will

run away from you if I can." Before the little girl could put out her hand to take it, it ran away from her, and ran and ran until it came to a broad and deep river. While it stood there wondering how it should get across, a sly old fox came up, and he also said: "Good-morning, little sweet cake, where did you come from?" It said to the fox as it had said to the others: "I ran away from the little old woman and the little old man, from the little old kettle and the little old pan, and now I will run away from you if I can."

"Stop!" said the fox; "I will carry you over the river if you will get on the end of my tail." The little sweet cake said: "I fear you will eat me up." The fox said: "Try me, and you will see."

So the little sweet cake got on the end of his tail.

Pretty soon the fox called out: "The water is getting deeper and you must get on my back." The little sweet cake said: "I fear you will eat me up." But the fox again said: "Try me, and you will see." So the little sweet cake hopped up along the back of the old fox. After swimming still farther out into the river, the fox cried out to the little sweet cake to get up to the top of his head, or it would surely be drowned; and though the poor little sweet cake was afraid of the fox, it was still more afraid of the deep water, and so it crept up to the top of his head. Very soon the fox was in the middle of the river, where the water was very, very deep, and so he called out, in a loud voice, to the little sweet cake, to get on the end of his nose; and, as soon as it did so, the wicked old fox opened his mouth very wide and ate up the poor little sweet cake before it could say a word.



THE FIVE-FINGER FOLK.

BY OLIVE A. WADSWORTH.

AH! what dear little things the five-finger folk are! And they live on every little baby-hand. Can you find them? First, there's Little Pea, she's the smallest of all; Tilly Lou stands next; she is taller than Little Pea. Bess Throstle is of about the same size as Tilly Lou; and Lu Whistle, who is the tallest of the family, stands between them. Then there's Tommy Bumble,—sometimes known as Thumbkin,—what a plump, funny little fellow he is!

Now you shall have a song about them all; so hold out your little fist and we'll begin:

LITTLE Pea, Little Pea, pray where are you going,
In your little pink hood and your little pink shoe?
"I'm going where *she* goes, my next bigger sister;
I always go with her—my own Tilly-Lou."

Tilly-Lou, Tilly-Lou, pray where are you going,
With motions as light as the down of a thistle?
"I'm going where *she* goes, my next bigger sister;
I always go with her—my own Lucy Whistle."

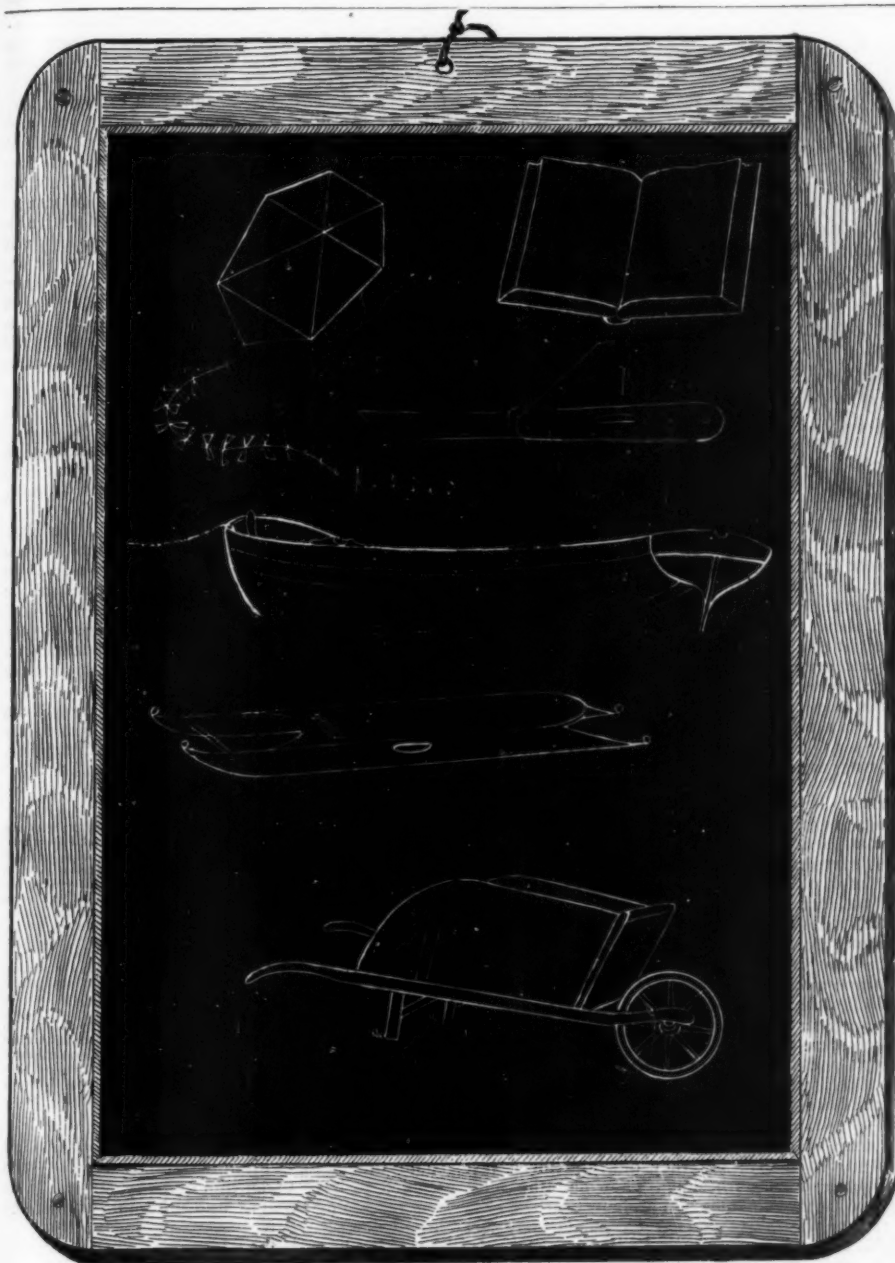
Lu Whistle, Lu Whistle, pray where are you going?—
You're frail to be tossed in the jar and the jostle!
"I'm going where *she* goes, my next little sister;
I always go with her—my own Bessie Throstle."

Bess Throstle, Bess Throstle, pray where are you going?—
Beware, as you rove, of a trip or a tumble!
"I'm going where *he* goes, my only big brother;
I always go with him—my own Tommy Bumble."

Tom Bumble, Tom Bumble, pray where are you going,
If you don't think it rude to ask or to guess?
"I'm going where *they* go, my four little sisters—
Little Pea, Tilly-Lou, Lu Whistle, and Bess."

Little folk, little folk, where *are* you all going?
Going up?—going down?—going out?—going in?
"We're going, we're going, we're going creep-mousing
Right under the dimple in baby's own chin!"

-hand.
next;
nd Lu
ble,—



A KITE ; a book ; a knife ; a boat ; a sled ; a wheelbarrow. Now, which of these shall brother or sister copy for you on the slate ?

VOL. VI.—10.



JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT.

Now for the long, cold, silent nights, and short, brisk, busy days,—though I'm told there are some parts of the world where things are just the other way, about this time, and other parts where it is all night and no day, and yet others where it is all day and no night. Well, well! A cheery world it is; never dark on one side but what the sun smiles bright and warm upon the other.

Here, now, is something jovial, about

THE LARGEST WEDDING THAT EVER WAS.

YOUR "Jack" has told you about many large things, my hearers, and now you shall have an account, sent by Mrs. Kellogg, of the largest and most remarkable wedding since the world began.

It took place at Susa. When the great Alexander had conquered Persia, wishing to unite the victors and the vanquished by the strongest ties possible, he decreed a wedding festival. Now, guess how many people he ordered to be married? You never could do it.

Well, Alexander himself was to marry Statira, the daughter of Darius; one hundred of his chief officers were to be united to ladies from the noblest Persian and Medean families, and ten thousand of his Greek soldiers were to marry ten thousand Asiatic women;—twenty thousand two hundred and two people to be married at once!

I don't see how they ever managed to get up a feast for so many; but they did, and for a vast multitude of guests beside. They had the most splendid arrangements. On a plain, near the city, a vast pavilion was erected on pillars sixty feet high. It was hung and spread with the richest tissues, while the gold and precious stones which ornamented it would have made your eyes blink. Adjoining this building were a hundred gorgeous chambers for the hundred bridegrooms, while, for

the remaining ten thousand, an outer court was inclosed and hung with costly tapestry; and tables were spread outside for the multitude.

A separate seat was assigned to each pair, and all were arranged in a semicircle on either hand of the royal throne. Each bridegroom had received a golden vessel for his libation, and when the last of these had been announced by trumpets to the multitudes without, the brides entered the banquet-hall and took their places. And now, don't think that each bridegroom stood up separately and vowed, "With this ring I thee wed," and so on. No, the ceremony was very simple: the king gave his hand to Statira and kissed her as his wife, and the other bridegrooms followed his example. That was the way. Then came the festival, lasting five days, with music and feats of jugglery, and play-acting, and all kinds of delightful games.

MUSSELS THAT TRAP DUCKS.

ONCE I heard a woful tale of a duckling,—a handsome, downy, active little fellow who came to an untimely end. It happened on the Pamunky River, in Virginia.

At low tide, one day, the little duck was paddling around, lively and busy as usual, when, suddenly, he stopped right where he was, unable to move; and when the tide came in, it rose above his unlucky head, and drowned him.

The cause of this was a mussel, into whose gaping shell the duckling had accidentally put his foot. Snap went the jaws of the shell, and the poor duck was held fast.

This took place some time ago, and now, I am told, there are no ducks on Pamunky River; the mussels are too many and too fond of trapping.

HOW TO MAKE A WIND-HARP.

Des Moines, Iowa.

DEAR JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT: In your October number, some one asked how to make a wind-harp, or Eolian harp. As I happen to have an old paper telling people just how to make one, I will tell you. First get a long, narrow box, as long as the window in which it is to be placed. It must be made of thin pine, four inches deep and five in width. On the top, at the ends, fasten two bits of oak about half an inch high and a quarter of an inch thick. Into one of these pieces put seven "twisting" pegs, such as are used for fiddles; into the other piece fasten the same number of small brass pins. To each pin tie one end of a string made of catgut, and twist the other end of the string around a peg, tuning the string in unison with the rest, by turning the peg as in a fiddle. Place over the row of strings, and three inches above them, a thin board held up by four pegs fastened into supports glued to the ends of the box inside. The harp is then complete and should be put in place, the window partly closed. To increase the draught of air, the door or an opposite window in the room should be open. If the harp be placed in a strong current of air in a grotto or arbor, or hidden in some shady nook near a waterfall, the effect of its sweet sound is improved.—Yours truly, N. E. H.

JAPANESE MANNERS.

A SCHOOL-BOY was walking down my meadow some time ago, with a sharp-nosed man, who seemed to have taken him quite by surprise. He was screaming straight into the round eyes of the little fellow:

"What! call the Japanese 'half-civilized'? Why, their servants and laborers are as polite as possible among themselves, no less than toward persons of high station. It seems to come natural to them to say: 'Pray excuse me,' 'Condescend

to let me see it,' 'With pleasure,' 'Pardon my rudeness,' 'Allow me to offer you a cup of tea,' and so on; and all without the least constraint or stiffness. Now, when you can show me habits so courteous and a spirit so gentlemanly among —"

I did n't catch any more of what the sharp-nosed man said; but he went striding off beside the little boy, shaking his fist high in air. For aught I know, he might have been going to wind up with some unpleasant reference to —, but I don't see what use there can be in *my* guessing.

bled about, for the rest of their lives, with their heads close together. We cannot know how long they lived this way. They may have been able to eat a little grass, if both of them agreed to put down their heads at the same time. But at last they died. And how curiously things turned out! Each of them hoped to kill the other, and yet the result of the quarrel was to bind them together as long as they lived, and even death did not part them. And, if they thought that no one would ever know of their fight, how greatly they were



THE RECORD OF THE FIGHT.

A STRANGE END TO A FIGHT.

DEACON GREEN sends a curious photograph, which the editors have had engraved. This is what the deacon says about the picture:

"These two skulls of stags, with their horns so firmly locked together that they could not be separated, were found in the mountains of Colorado. It is quite plain that they once belonged to a couple of stags who had a terrible fight in the solitude of the mountains. After the combat had been kept up some time, their horns became so tangled and locked together that they could not get them apart. It is very probable, that when this happened, they stopped thinking of fighting, and tried their best to get away from each other. But this was of no use. Their horns were so firmly interlocked that they could not twist nor pull them apart. So they stum-

mistaken! The record of their combat—these two skulls fastened together—has remained for many a long year, and will remain for many a year to come. It was truly a strange end to a fight.

"Shakspeare makes Polonius say:

"Beware
Of entrance to a quarrel: but, being in,
Bear 't, that the opposer may beware of thee."

These stags did that with a vengeance; did n't they?
"It very often happens in other fights or disputes that the fighters cannot stop and separate just when they wish to. Something is apt to get hopelessly interlocked and tangled, such as good-will, or self-respect, or fairness, or honor. Still, one must n't be too peaceable, as the Quaker said when he took up a pitchfork as he saw the mad bull coming."

THE LETTER-BOX.

Santa Barbara, Cal.
 DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I read a piece in Jack-in-the-Pulpit in the number for January, 1878, which I picked up lately, about a garden in winter time. We have flowers all the time in Santa Barbara. The roses are prettier in winter than in summer, and we never see snow except on the mountains; but we have a beautiful sea.—Yours truly,
 E. M. L.

In the November "Letter-Box" we asked the boys and girls to send us before November 1, short stories, written by themselves, concerning the picture of "The Young Hunter," on page 28 of the November number. "November 1" was a mistake; and now we say that the best one of these stories, written by a boy or girl, and received before December 1, shall be printed, with the picture, in our "Young Contributors' Department;" provided, of course, that the young author complies with the other conditions mentioned in the November "Letter-Box."

A YOUNG correspondent, who must be fond of surprising facts and figures, sends us the following information which he has gathered concerning London, England:

It covers within the fifteen miles' radius from Charing Cross nearly 700 square miles.

It numbers within these boundaries 4,000,000 inhabitants.

It comprises 100,000 foreigners from every quarter of the globe.

It contains more Roman Catholics than Rome itself, more Jews than the whole of Palestine, more Irish than Dublin, more Scotchmen than Edinburgh, more Welshmen than Cardiff, and more country-born persons than the counties of Devon, Warwickshire, and Durham combined.

It has a birth in it every five minutes, a death in it every eight minutes, and seven accidents every day in its 7,000 miles of streets.

It has on an average twenty-eight miles of new streets opened, and 9,000 new houses built, in it every year.

It has 1,000 ships and 9,000 sailors in its port every day.

It has an influence with all parts of the world, represented by the yearly delivery in its postal districts of 238,000,000 letters.

Castle Hill.
 DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I send an answer to the question asked by "D. J.," in your October number. The question was: "Which was the greatest battle of Alexander the Great?" Noun: "Toes." And the answer was to be in rhyme and contain the noun "Toes." Here is my answer:

Alexander's greatest battle
 (As everybody knows),
 Was the battle of Arbela,
 Where the crowd was so tremendous
 That the soldiers—Saul defend us!—
 Trod on one another's "toes."

A. L. RIVES.

T. H. L.—"Down in the dumps" is not thought a polite expression; but, if it is slang, it certainly is very old slang, and, perhaps, its origin is more aristocratic than that of many upstart, fashionable new words. It means "dejected," or "out of spirits,"—and is derived from the name of Dumps, a King of Egypt, who built a pyramid, but died of melancholy.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I heard from the late General Scammon this anecdote of Ben McCullough, who was prominent in the Confederate army. He was a West Point graduate, and while U. S. Artillery colonel, made a visit to Montreal, where he was present at a military parade. The Canadian officers, in compliment to his army rank, invited him to maneuver a horse-battery. A horse-battery was something unknown in U. S. military service, and McCullough was completely ignorant of the drill. The U. S. officers who accompanied him, knowing of this ignorance, expected to hear him decline the Canadian invitation. But without a sign of being disconcerted, McCullough replied that he would be very happy to maneuver the battery, and promptly stepped into the position of command.

If you ever heard a military drill, you will remember that you could not make out a word the commanding officer said; that his orders seemed incoherent sounds delivered explosively, but passed through muffled. McCullough remembered this, and argued in a flash that the men knew the drill "by heart," as dancers know the figures of a quadrille, and that a *staccato* bark would serve for a signal as perfectly as the most cleanly cut words. So he stood up straight,

looked at the battery-men in an awful way, and shouted in a voice of muffled thunder: "Fee! foh! fum!" The thoroughly trained men executed the first movement in the familiar drill, and when McCullough saw it drawing to a close, he gave a second guttural shout: "Hi to the Poles!" The next order was, "Run like mad!" and the next, "Blui! dah! g'long!"

Here are some others: "Hop! skip! jump!" "Charge for the moon!" "Storm Venus!" "Go to thunder!"

Of course the words were spoken in a very smothered way; but he stood up grandly, looking like a major-general, though ready to burst with laughter. It seems to me that somebody standing near must have found him out.—Truly yours,
 G. M. K.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: You are always so kind as to answer questions sent to ST. NICHOLAS, so I am going to ask you in what sense the word "Mixpah" is used on Christmas cards, valentines, etc. Can you also tell me how many years a student must remain at West Point or Annapolis in order to graduate?—Yours very truly,
 RITA T. HOWLAND.

Mixpah is the name given by Jacob and Laban to a pillar raised to commemorate their vows of friendship. In Genesis, chapter xxxi, verse 49, the interpretation given is: "The Lord watch between me and thee when we are absent from one another." No doubt, the same interpretation may be pleasantly given to the word when used on Christmas cards.

To graduate at either Annapolis or West Point, the student must remain four years and, of course, pass the examinations.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: The other night a man came past our place with a big box of pigs, and papa bought 4, one for each of us. We each have now 1 pig apiece, 1 dog, 18 chickens all together in a house that my brothers built, and 3 goats, 1 donkey, 3 wagons, and 1 sulky and 2 turtles. I am a little over 10 years old.

When I don't have anything to do, I just pick up one of your books and read and get out enigmas. It is real fun.—Yours very truly,
 MARIE MANICE.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: A friend of mine, who at one time lived in Rome, Italy, tells this story, which those of your readers who have a special love for Michael Angelo and his works may like to know:

A young sculptor named Hogan, while studying his art in Rome, used to stand, for many minutes together, lost in self-forgetful fits of admiration, before some of the masterpieces of the old-time sculptors. A statue by Michael Angelo—representing St. Bruno in the act of preaching one of his wonderful sermons—oftenest and strongest cast this spell upon the young man. Indeed, it is said that he visited this statue daily, standing before it for fifteen or twenty minutes at a time, and gazing at it, in an ecstasy of delight and deep study.

One day, while thus engaged, Hogan was tapped on the shoulder by an old friend, who said to him:

"What is the meaning of this freak of yours, friend Hogan?"
 "I am waiting for him to speak," said the sculptor, in his usual quiet tone, and pointing to the statue.

The story is a true one, and I think Hogan paid a deserved homage to Michael Angelo.—Yours truly,
 P. J. H.

Brooklyn.
 DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Will you please publish this poem of mine in the Letter-Box?—Truly yours,
 R. G.

ONE LITTLE CLOUD.

One little cloud,	Suppose you get lost
Whither do you roam?	In the sky so blue,
Pretty little cloud,	Then, little cloud,
You'd better go home.	What would you do?

Little cloud answered,
 "I just came out to play,
 My friends are coming soon
 To make a rainy day."

Aylmer, Ontario, Canada.
 DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: We are twins, and were ten years old last March, and we want to tell you about two 'coons that we had, and we named them Mary and Jack, and they were so tame that they would climb upon our shoulders, and lick our faces, and play with our hair, and they always ate with their fore-paws; and we had to watch them when they were loose, as they would go to the neighbors' houses

and get on their beds and sleep, which was very naughty, as they always played in the dirt, and had such dirty feet; and they would get in an apple or cherry tree and throw the fruit at people, and then hide. One day they found the butter in the house and began to eat it with their two paws, which was very comical to see. One night, when they were chained up, some dogs got at them, and killed them, and we were very sorry, as we had become very fond of them.—
Yours truly,
ROSA AND LILLIE PARKHURST.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I am a little girl thirteen years old, a reader of the ST. NICHOLAS, and I see in it some letters and poetry written by little girls of my age; and I have written some poetry which is simple, and brings in all the neighbors, both rich and poor, in our neighborhood, but please don't print where our neighborhood is. If it is good enough for the "Letter-Box," I should like very much to see it there.—Your constant reader,
J. S.

"Fire! fire!"

Said Mrs. McGuire.

"Where? where?"

Said Mrs. Blair.

"Down town."

Said Mrs. Brown.

"Oh! oh! save us!"

Said Mrs. Davis.

"Where will we get water?"

Said Mrs. McWhorter.

"In the race."

Said Mrs. Gamercace.

"Or in the ditch."

Says Mrs. Fitch.

"Put on the water and drench her!"

Says Mrs. Spencer.

"How the flame ascends!"

Said Mrs. Bens.

"There goes the floor in!"

Said Mrs. Doren.

"The fire-men need relief."

Said Mrs. O'Kieffe.

"See the stuff they are carting!"

Said Mrs. Martin.

"Largest fire I've ever seen!"

Said Mrs. Dean.

"I'm glad I am not neighbor."

Said Mrs. Seabor.

"For that building there's not a hope!"

Said Mrs. Rope.

"These fires are very troublesome."

Said Mrs. Robison.

"Fire leaves a black mark."

Said Mrs. Clark.

"I am sure there is nothing blacker."

Said Mrs. Tacker.

"I must go home, they will miss me."

Said Mrs. McChesney.

Claremont, N. H.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I was looking at ST. NICHOLAS for June, 1878, this week, and I discovered a mistake in the picture of a boy milking a cow. (P. 517.)

I used to live in Fairfield, New York, and one time, when I was visiting a farmer, I went to the barn, and the hired man, Jim, came in to milk. He sat down on the left-hand side of the cow, and she kicked him over. Farmer Neely dryly remarked:

"You'd better try the right side, next time."
Now, I want to ask you if your artist has put the boy on the "right and proper side" of the cow?
EDDIE M. GODDARD.

You certainly are right, Eddie, as to the side one should take when milking a cow; but, if you will read the story again, you will see that none of the party, except Bob Trotter, knew how to milk a cow. The artist remembered this when making his picture, which shows Kit at the wrong side of the cow trying to milk, and Bob Trotter coming across the field toward him and his amused companions.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: I should like to tell you about a curious surprise party that really was held in the winter of 1828, in what is now Hillsboro', Illinois.

Mr. and Mrs. Prestons had gone away from their log-cabin, which was away off from everywhere, to make a long visit in a distant town. Mary, their daughter, aged thirteen, was left in charge of the home, and of her brothers, William and John, one nine years old, and the other, seven.

Well, on the first day the father and mother were away, the boys dropped off to sleep at dusk, weary with extra play. Mary tidied up, barred the doors, raked together the embers on the hearth, put on a few bits of wood, and was just about to go to bed, when from

outside sounded a terrible scream! This made the hearts of all stand still with fear, for the scream was made by a panther.

Soon he was scratching at the front door, and bounding against it, trying to force his way in. Again and again Mary called the dog, but no answer came. Presently the panther went around to the back door, having failed in front; but the bars were strong, and he could not get in that way. Then the children heard him clambering up the corner of the cabin and leaping about upon the roof, and next they heard his hungry sniffing at the top of the wide chimney. Then, something had to be done at once, if they would prevent their unexpected visitor from dropping in and making a meal of them. What Johnnie did, and what the panther did besides sniffing up there, I don't know. But William said over and over the little prayer that begins, "Now I lay me." Mary leaned over the hearth a moment, listening, open-mouthed and staring, her head under the chimney, and the light of the low fire flickering over her face and form. Then she seemed to awake suddenly, and, seizing the straw bed, she threw it on the fire. The flames quickly roared up the chimney, and, no doubt, singed Mr. Panther's whiskers. At least, he must have taken offense at this warm welcome, for, giving a harsh, discouraged howl, he leaped from the roof, and never called again.

I think that was well and bravely done by Mary. Since then, William has become a parson. Yours truly,
R. S. H.

Baltimore, Md.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: One evening we were playing paper dolls and telling ghost-stories, when we heard a step in the hall like something promenading up and down. We were very much frightened, as the step was like none we had ever heard before. We ran and looked over the stairs, and what do you suppose we saw? A GREAT BIG GOOSE!—Your little friends,
ALICE AND AMY.

Cernay-la-ville, France.

DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: You see I am in Cernay-la-ville, a French village of about fifty old thatched houses, a *mairie* (town hall), and a picturesque church.

Cernay-la-ville, and the two or three villages near, belong to a duchess. A while ago, the duchess invited the Maréchal McMahon to hunt through her reserved grounds. He accepted the invitation, and one afternoon we saw him and his attendants hunt through the big beet-fields behind our house.

We first saw a long line of fifty beaters,—"rabattoirs," they are called,—hand in hand, on the distant hill, waving red and white flags, and going across the country. Before them scudded the big hares, and skimming over the ground came the quail, glancing a moment in the sun as they turned for shelter into the beet-field, which soon was full of game. The hunters then advanced into the field in a line, with men to pick up the game close behind. Soon there was a popping of guns, like a small skirmish; sometimes a pheasant would start up and twenty marksmen would fire at him, and he would sail triumphantly by. We cheered him as he went over our heads.

But a big hare was the best: he broke out of the beet-field, and got through the line of rabattoirs posted to prevent the game from passing. They waved their flags and set on their dog; then there was a confusion like the blowing down of a line full of washed clothes; but the hare finally bore bravely away. The dog in his eagerness turned a double somersault, and lost the scent, and the hare was gone. "A hare-breadth escape"—Yours,
R. B.

Yonkers, N. Y.

MY DEAR ST. NICHOLAS: Your youngsters may be interested in finding the solution of the problem which has puzzled mathematicians of all ages, viz., the Squaring of the Circle.—Yours truly,
J. N.

My first is never square, but always round—

My second flew too near the sun, he found—

My third 's the rarest of all rarities—

My fourth to bring forth out of nothing is—

My fifth is shed on heroes by their deeds—

My sixth is due to good men of all creeds.

ANSWER.

CIRCLE

ICARUS

RAREST

CREATE

LUSTRE

ESTEEM

BOOKS RECEIVED.

MESSRS. PORTER & COATES, Philadelphia, send the "Boy Trapper," the second volume of the "Boy Trapper" series. It continues the story begun in the first volume. The author is Harry Castlemon, and the story and pictures are calculated to interest boys in a wholesome way.

THE BODLEYS ON WHEELS. Houghton, Osgood & Co. This is another of the illustrated "Bodley" books by Mr. Horace E. Scudder. It is, if possible, even better than its forerunners, in the way it is

made and in its curious and charming cover. Besides its other good points, it has special local and historical interest; for it tells, in a bright and pleasant way, how the whole Bodley family cruised in a carry-all through Essex County, Massachusetts,—one of the parts earliest settled by the Puritans. It describes what the Bodleys saw and did, and the stirring tales and quaint anecdotes they heard concerning famous personages and places of old times and of to-day.

THE AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY sends:

"Guiding Lights," a small illustrated book by F. E. Cooke, telling in plain language the stories of the lives of Michael Angelo Buonarroti; Madame Guyon, the devout Frenchwoman; Martin Luther; and Frederick Perthes, the German bookseller and philanthropist;—four shining examples of true manhood and womanhood;—

"Heroes of Charity," by James F. Cobb, Fellow of the English Royal Geographical Society,—also an illustrated book of biographies. The men whose lives the volume records are John Howard, the prisoners' friend; Las Casas, the friend of the American Indians; Johannes Falk, the friend of poor children; Pestalozzi, the wonderful school-master; Baron de Montyon, the kind Frenchman; and Valentine Haüy, the friend of the blind. The reading matter in this book is clear and unpretentious, but the pictures are poor;—

"Champions of the Reformation," by Janet Gordon, illustrated, gives in a simple, pleasant way the histories of eight worthies of the great Reformation;—

"Daisybunk," by Joanna H. Mathews, illustrated, is an interesting story of a boy who got into trouble by mixing with evil companions;—

"Christmas Jack," By Rev. Edward A. Rand. Illustrated. A pathetic temperance story;—

"Handsome Harry," By Sarah E. Chester. Illustrated. A pleasant and natural story of lively boys and girls, and how they grew to be handsome inwardly as well as outwardly;—

"Life and Adventures in Japan." By E. Warren Clark. Illustrated from original photographs, and with an outline map. This is a crisp, plain, and interesting account of varied life in Japan, by one who spent four years there, and used his eyes to good purpose.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN THE OCTOBER NUMBER were received, before October 15, from James H. Slade, Jr., Anna K. Stratton, Ernest A. Munsell; Lewis G. and Bertie Davis; Georgine C. Schnitzspahn, "Princy," S. Norris Knapp, "N. E. W. S.," Carrie and Mary F. Speiden; Emma Lathers, "R. N.," Geo. Houghton, "Nice Little Camerinos," Mina C. Packard, C. L. S. Tingley; Harry and Jack Bennett; Mary H. Bradley, Southwick C. Briggs, Maria Briggs, Lizzie H. D. St. Vrain, Minnie Bissell, B. F. Emery, "Fritters No. 2," "Willowbrook," Neils E. Hansen, Willie Gray, Dycie Warden, Julia Crafton, John V. L. Pierson, Charles H. Stout, Irla Smith, "F. W.," Maud L. Smith, "Hard and Tough," Lulu Robert; "Dr. J. E. Clark and Wife"; "Don Hippolyte Lopez Pomposo and Signora Marie Baratta Morgani"; H. B. Ayres, Bessie Hard, Florence L. Turrill; David Phillips Hawkins and Leah; "Ursino," J. Wade McGowan; "Litchfield, no name"; "Two Wills," Sarah Gallett, Emmy A. Leach, Kate Sampson; Amy Z. Adams, Walter and Grant Squires, and "Mrs. Foulard and the lamented T. J."

Mamie E. Sumner, and "Bessie and her Cousin," answered correctly all the puzzles in the October number.

THE RIDDLE-BOX.

EASY ENIGMA.

I AM a familiar proverb composed of twenty-six letters.
My 1, 4, 3, 13, 9, are plants with bitter juice. 2. My 5, 11, 10, is a division of land. 3. My 2, 6, 7, 8, has no end. 4. My 23, 24, 16, 17, is a troublesome insect. 5. My 20, 18, 21, 12, 15, is a bitter medicine. 6. My 14, 19, 22, 25, 26, is a fixed number of small articles.
G. Y. C.

HOOR-GLASS PUZZLE.

ACROSS: 1. To weave. 2. A southern constellation containing nine stars. 3. A consonant. 4. Part of the human body. 5. Separated into blocks. Diagonal, from left to right, downward: Uncovered. Diagonal, from right to left, reading downward: Arrows. Central, reading downward: A weapon.

CYRIL DEANE.

EASY PICTORIAL PUZZLE.



Find the names of two celebrated statesmen, represented by these pictures.

CONCEALED DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

It was last year that Lena omitted her singing, as well as her drawing. She became deaf, and the glint of the light hurt her eyes. So they had to let her teacher,—Maria,—go. But, before she went, they had a sail, or rather a row, together, after which Maria left to teach a young Italian.

In the above sentences are concealed seven words, meaning: 1. The word. 2. A Scripture name. 3. Used for lighting. 4. Scraped linen used in dressing wounds. 5. A Shakspearian character. 6. A mariner. 7. Dried grass.

The initials and finals of these words name the chronicles of a certain nation.

STALLKNECHT.

CONNECTED DIAMONDS.

LEFT-HAND DIAMOND, reading across: 1. In imprinatur. 2. A house of entertainment. 3. To bury. 4. What everything is at first. 5. In Merovingian.

RIGHT-HAND DIAMOND, reading across: 1. In antediluvian. 2. Fear. 3. String. 4. What everything must have. 5. In amber.

THE CENTRALS, connected, form one word, reading across, meaning, to connect by weaving together.

R. A.

EASY CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.

My first is in pencil, but not in slate.
My second is in post, but not in gate.
My third is in sun and also in sunder.
My fourth is in silent and also in thunder.
My fifth is in John, but not in Frank.
My sixth is in office, but not in bank.
My seventh is in friend and also in foe.
My eighth is in high, but not in low.
My ninth is in cane, but not in staff.
My tenth is in wheat, but not in chaff.
My whole is a very useful thing.

It serves the poor man and it serves the king.

'T is sought by all, girl, boy and man.

Now guess this riddle; that is,—if you can!

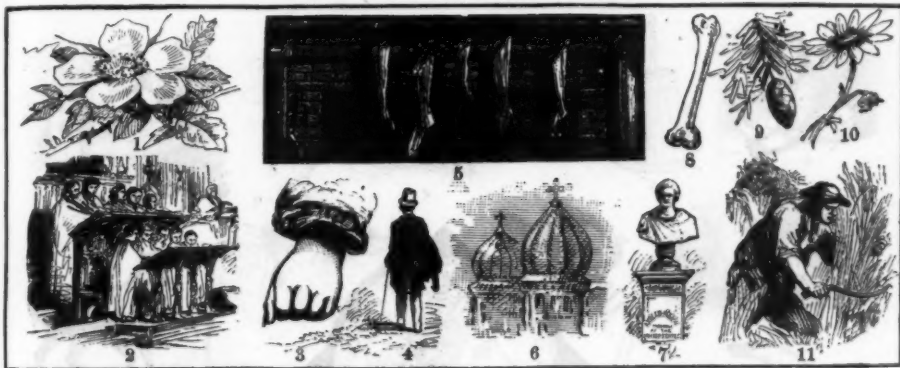
MAMIE L. W.

NUMERICAL ENIGMA.

AFTER feeding the 1, 6, 7, the 5, 3, 9 killed a 4, 8, 2, and, taking a gun, went to the mountain in search of a 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 for dinner.

ISOLA.

PICTORIAL CONCEALED-WORD PUZZLE.



This picture is a Concealed-Word puzzle. It represents the second line of a familiar Christmas couplet, which line gives one good reason for being merry at Christmas time. In the order indicated by the numerals, write eleven words descriptive of the eleven pictures. The letters of any one word of the answer may not fall all together, without intervening letters or spaces, but, if the right descriptive words have been written, the letters of the answer will be found concealed in proper succession among the eleven descriptive words.

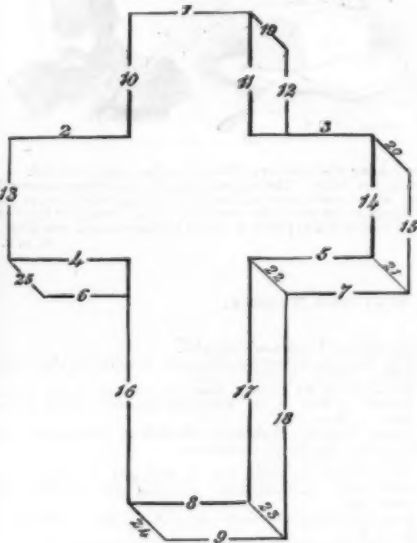
SQUARE-WORD.

1. A set of bells. 2. Integrity of character. 3. To make oneself liable to. 4. A small gnawing animal. 5. Wandered from duty. A.

CHARADE.

MOTHER was making my first for Johnny, Johnny was doing some second for Sally, and Sally was making some whole for mother. L. E.

PERSPECTIVE CROSS.



The horizontal words in this cross have five letters each, except number 6, which has three. Of the perpendiculars, 16, 17, 18 have ten letters each, number 12 has three. All other perpendiculars have five letters each; the slanting words have three.

The meanings of the words are: 1. A wanderer. 2. To aim. 3. To hesitate. 4. A bird. 5. A color. 6. An animal. 7. A time of darkness. 8. To feed. 9. To intimidate. 10. A tale. 11. A Biblical king. 12. A jewel. 13. An organ of the body. 14. To exercise controlling influence. 15. A fish. 16. A scientific person. 17. A kind of dog. 18. Lowest. 19. An animal. 20. An animal. 21. A kind of fruit. 22. To excrete. 23. A point used in writing. 24. A boy's nickname. 25. A part of the body. "GREENE HORNE."

EASY METAGRAM.

1. BEHEAD a kind of rod, and leave a person given to unlawful arts. 2. Syncopate and transpose the person, and leave a small portion. 3. Transpose the portion and leave a part of speech. 4. Curtail the part of speech, and leave a man of genius. 5. Behead the man of genius, and leave a pronoun. 6. Curtail the pronoun, and leave a Roman numeral.

A PROVERB IN CIPHER.

In this problem, the letters A and B are the same in the common alphabet and in the cipher key. Of the other letters, T in the cipher stands for S of the alphabet and the cipher O means the alphabet W. The cipher words have the same number of letters as are in the words to which they correspond, and they occur in the order of the words of the proverb. The proverb is a common one, and applies to the solving of such puzzles as this. Here it is in cipher: "IOG EDACT AUD BDIHU IEAF GFD."

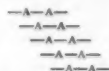
CENTRAL DELETIONS.

(For older puzzlers.)

In each of the following examples, remove the middle letter of the word first described, in order to form the second. The letters that have been taken away, when arranged in order as they come, will spell a Latin word, meaning "little grape," used in English writing as the name of a part of the human throat.

1. Publicly liked; a tree. 2. A scene of great, perhaps free, enjoyment; a kind of dance. 3. Color; male. 4. A name of a sea-port of the United States of Colombia; an animal that climbs trees. 5. A country of Europe; to turn. Y. E.

RHOMBOID DROP-LETTER PUZZLE.



FILL the blanks of the rhomboid with letters which, with the vowels given, will form words having the following meanings:

Across: 1. Destructive. 2. A girl's name meaning, "princess." 3. Intrigue. 4. Pertaining to the foundation. 5. Native. Down: 1. A sign in printed music. 2. A word meaning "like;" also a Roman weight of twelve ounces. 3. A word used in old law to signify a customary payment of tenants. 4. A native of Arabia. 5. A Scripture name of a man, meaning "white." 6. A verb, and a vowel. 7. An abbreviation of a geographical term. 8. The tone A. 9. A part of a house of certain form. H. H. D.

NEW-DOLLAR PUZZLE.



The central picture shows the face or obverse of the new silver dollar, the coining of which was authorized by the Congress of 1878. Find the word represented by each of the seventeen pictures, not counting the dollar. The numeral beneath each picture denotes the number of letters contained in the word for which the picture stands. When all the words have been found, re-arrange their letters so as to form twenty-six other words, of four letters each, representing twenty-six things on the face of the new dollar: thus, "head," "face," etc. (The word "eyes" would not do, as only one eye is seen.) It will aid in the solving of this puzzle to look at the face of a real new dollar. W. H. G.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NOVEMBER NUMBER.

DOUBLE RHYMING PUZZLE.—

First Verse.	Second Verse.	Third Verse.
Ace — each.	Eels — roll.	In — Rip.
Lace — reach.	Reels — troll.	Sin — trip.
Place — breach.	Creels — stroll.	Tsin — strip.
Fourth Verse.	Fifth Verse.	
Ear — end.	Ripe — ream.	
Hear — rend.	Tripe — cream.	
Shear — trend.	Stripe — cream.	

RHOMBIC PUZZLE.—Across: 1. Part. 2. Meet. 3. Deer. 4. Maid. WHAT IS IT?—Whales, Wails, Wales.

CHANGED FINALS.—1. Alice; 2. Salem; sales. 3. Store; stork. 4. Stall; stalk. 5. Fine; pink. 6. Plan; play. 7. Shot; shod. 8. Clap; clam.

DIAMOND.—Across: 1. W. 2. Cam. 3. Caret. 4. Warbler. 5. Melon. 6. Ten. 7. R.

TRANPOSITIONS.—1. Founders; four ends. 2. Boasts; sabots. 3. Sent four; fortunes. 4. Mediations; no, it aids me. 5. I sold; solid. 6. Dames; meads. 7. Village; all give. 8. Scorn a; acorns. 9. Cautioned; education. 10. In dreams I; meridians. 11. O, I can shout; Housatonic.

NUMERICAL ENIGMA.—Shoewacacemette Rowing Club. TWO EASY DOUBLE SQUARE-WORDS.—Across: 1. 1. What. 2. Rare. 3. Even. 4. Neat. 11. 1. Star. 2. Name. 3. Omen. 4. Wend.

CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.—Wellington.

EASY CENTRAL ACROSTIC.—Diamond: 1. ADA. 2. sir. 3. cat. 4. AMY. 5. rOd. 6. aNd. 7. aDd.

DROP-LETTER REVERSIBLE DIAMOND.—Across: 1. D. 2. Dew. 3. Dewed. 4. Wed. 5. D. ENCLOSED SQUARE: Across: 1. Dew. 2. Ewe. 3. Wed.

FRAME PUZZLE.—Horizontals: Prodigious, broadsword. Perpendiculars: Bloodstone, troubadour. CHARADE.—Crow's-feet.

SYNCOPIATIONS.—1. Feast, feat. 2. Pilot, plot. 3. Broom, boom. 4. Wrist, writ. 5. Coral, coal. 6. Spine, sine. 7. Sable, sale. 8. Steer, seer.

EASY DIAMOND PUZZLE.—Across: 1. M. 2. Boa. 3. Moose. 4. Ash. 5. E.

EASY RHYMED REBUS FOR YOUNGER PUZZLERS.—Four lines that are easy and wise, Here are placed before your eyes, All means you see of learning seize, Be kind and mind you do not tease. Find useful ways your time to use, Attend well to your P's and Q's.

PICTORIAL PUZZLE.—1. Love's Labor's Lost. 2. All's well that ends well. 3. Timon of Athens. 4. Much ado about nothing. 5. Romeo and Juliet. 6. Hamlet, Prince of Denmark. 7. Midsummer-Night's Dream. 8. As you like it. 9. Two Gentlemen of Verona.

For the names of the solvers of October puzzles, see "Letter-Box," page 142.

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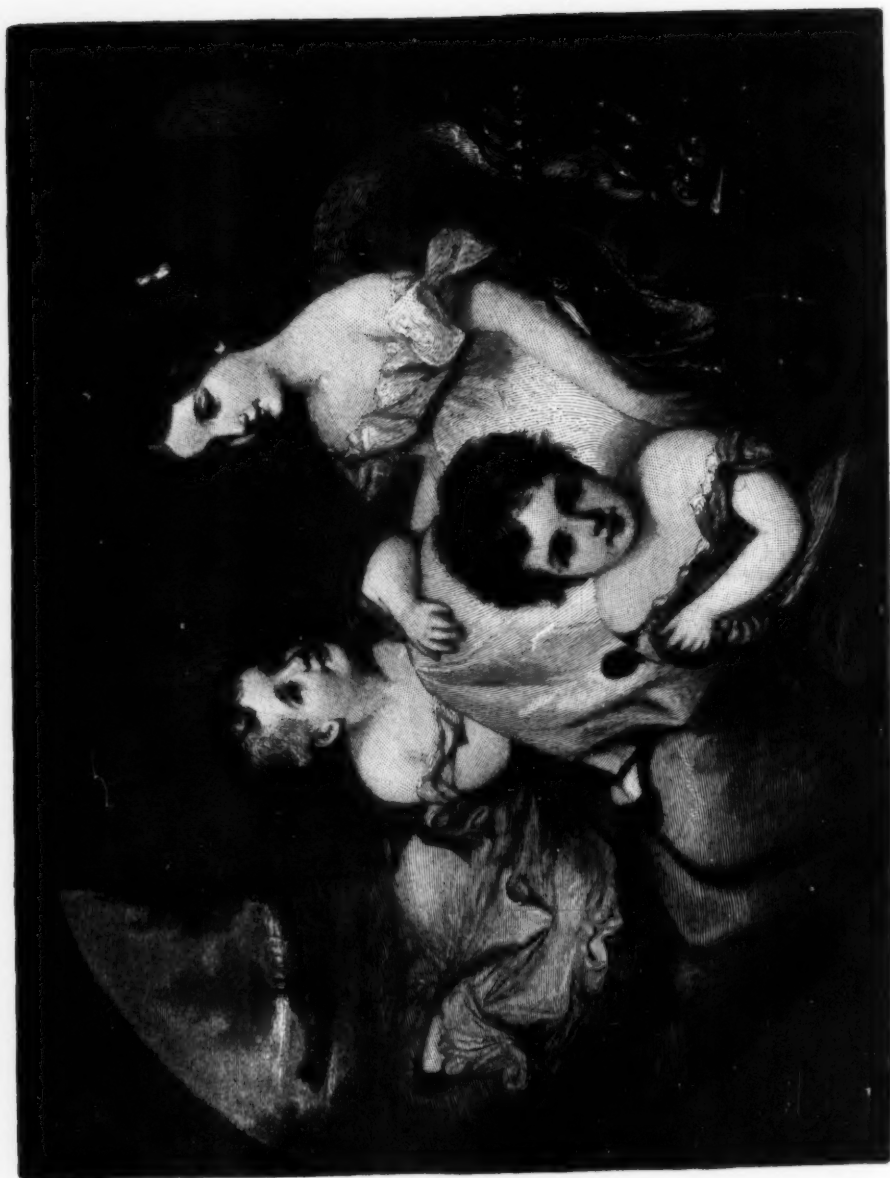
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THE SISTERS.

[FROM A PAINTING BY WILLIAM PAETEL.]

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